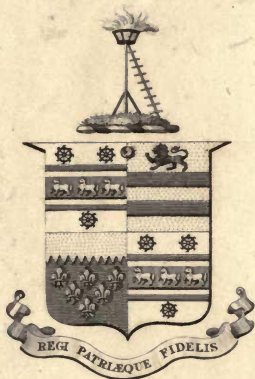




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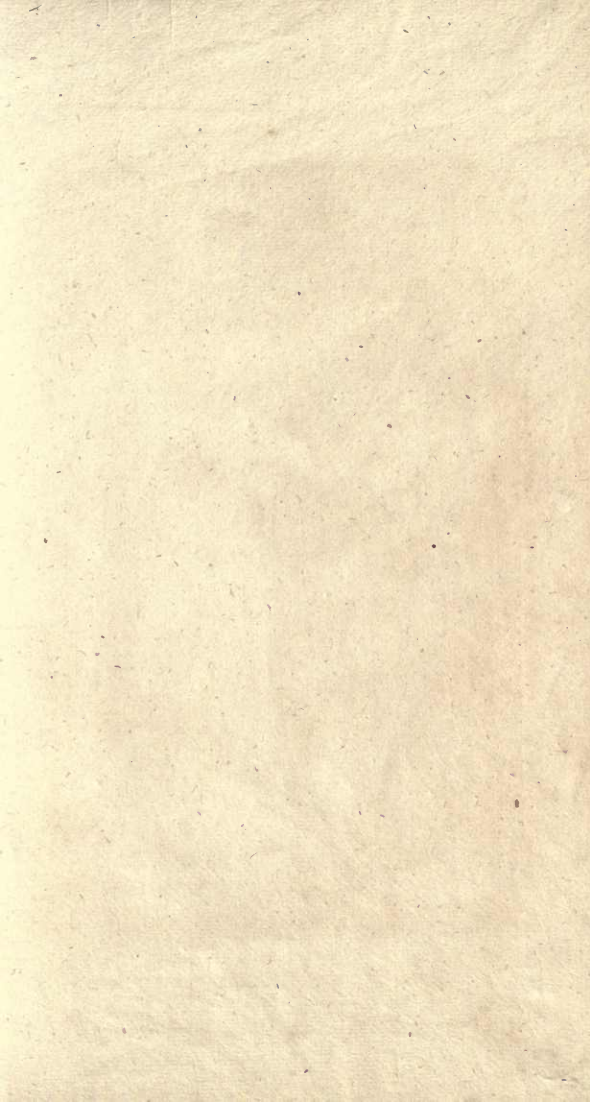


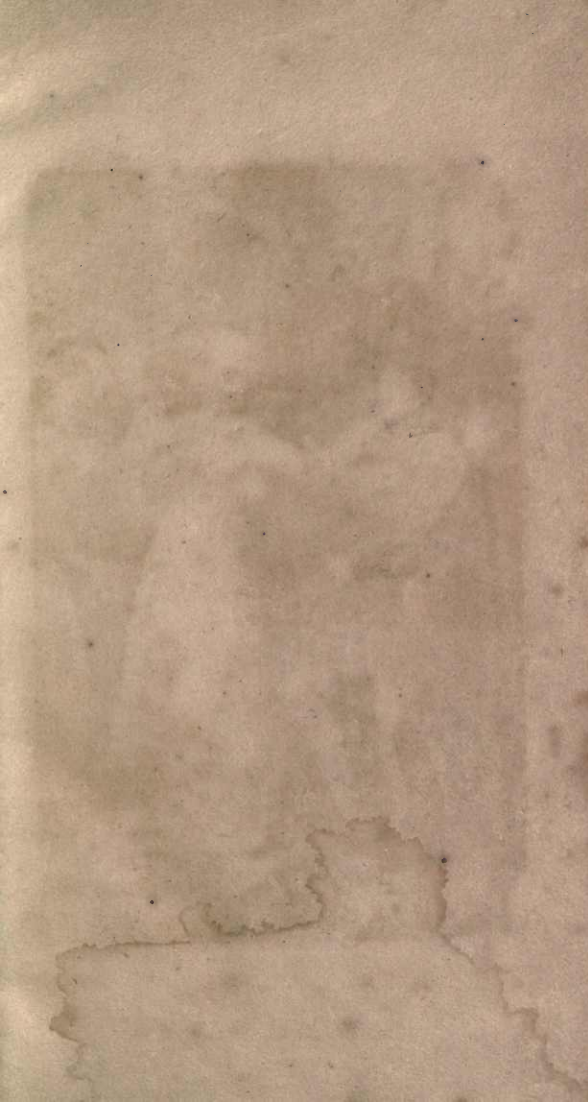
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ARTHUR MONTEITH.

just in time to receive in her arms her Father.

Arthur Monteith :

A

MORAL TALE,

Founded on an Historical Fact;

AND CALCULATED TO IMPROVE THE MINDS OF YOUNG
PEOPLE;

Being a Continuation of the "Scottish Orphans."

BY MRS. BLACKFORD,

AUTHOR OF

The Eskdale Herd-Boy, 'a very superior work; and we have read
it ourselves with much interest.'—*London Magazine*.

"How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature!"

SHAKESPEARE.

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR WETTON AND JARVIS, 65, PATER-
NOSTER ROW, CHEAPSIDE;

BY J. J. COWING, BARNET.

1822.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Author of the "**SCOTTISH ORPHANS**," grateful for the very flattering reception which the first part of that tale has received from an indulgent public, hastens to redeem her pledge of publishing a *Second Part* of the same History.

The present narrative is entitled **ARTHUR MONTEITH**, from the name of the principal actor in the former piece, which traced him from the period of his birth, to that of his attaining the object of his honourable ambition, a Commission in the King's service. It may here be proper, briefly, to recapitulate, that Arthur, with his sister Jessie, and his brother Allen, were the children

of a Scottish gentleman of ancient family, who forfeited his life and estate, by taking part in the Rebellion of 1745 ;—that the Orphans were preserved and brought up as their own, by two faithful domestics, WILLIAM AND JANE MATHIESON ;—that William was subsequently distinguished by the favour of COLONEL BEAUMONT, the husband of a lady whose father was believed to have perished in the rebellion ;—that Arthur, by the secret assistance of a person, known only to him as old ROBERT, the hermit, acquired the knowledge and accomplishments fit to enable him to move in a higher sphere of society ;—that he well repaid the confidence reposed in him by the old Recluse, and as steadily rejected all offers of placing him in an occupation equally unsuitable to his real origin (of which he retained an obscure recollection), and to his acquired talents ;—and finally, that being patronized by Colonel (afterwards Sir Charles) Beaumont, he accompanied the latter to India as his *aide-de-camp*.

It would be a needless repetition, to advert to the particulars mentioned of **LADY BEAUMONT**, and her little protégée, **JESSIE**—of **ANNIE** and **JAMIE**, the real children of the Mathiesons—of **COLONEL MONTEITH**, the unnatural uncle of Arthur's father—or of **COLIN**, the Colonel's son. These characters will be sufficiently developed in the progress of the ensuing narrative, to which, without further preface, we now proceed.

INTRODUCTION

It would be a mistake to suppose, to admit to the particular mentioned in Lady Bessborough, and her little party, Lady of Arden and Jane, the real children of the Maltraverses—of Colonel Montfort, the ancestral uncle of Arthur's father—or of Owen, the Colonel's son. These characters will be sufficiently developed in the progress of the ensuing narrative to which, without further preface, we now proceed.

The Publishers have great pleasure in announcing the speedy appearance of a Novel, founded on fact, from the pen of Mrs. Blackford, author of the present work, the Eskdale Herd-boy, &c. It will be in three volumes, and may be had at all Booksellers and Circulating Libraries, under the title of

ANNALS OF THE FAMILY OF M'ROY.

The public will be enabled to form some judgment of the scope and characteristic features of the forthcoming work, by the following account which is given of it in the

PREFACE.—THE indulgence and encouragement which have been shown on the part of the public, to the Author's former productions, have emboldened her again to take up the pen; and with somewhat less of apprehension than before, though still with very great diffidence, she ventures to call attention to another domestic narrative.

From an earnest desire to contribute toward improving the principles and correcting the errors of the rising generation, most of her previous efforts have been addressed to the younger class of readers; and from the favourable notice which they have received, she is led to hope that they have not wholly failed of their aim. She has, however, in some instances, carried on her humble efforts towards the instruction and amusement of a more advanced period of life: and the pre-

sent tale is of the latter description. It is proposed to give the history of two, not unamiable, nor inelegant females, from their first introduction into life, until the full development of their respective principles and habits, produces its decisive effect on their future lot. They are supposed, at the opening of the story, to be about to undergo their first separation from an attached and anxious mother, their only surviving parent, who up to this period had lived with them in great retirement, devoting herself to the vigilant superintendence of their education, and to the formation of their manners and morals. In the various scenes which ensue, and the consequent impressions which are made on the minds of these young ladies, will be seen the necessity of an early firmness of character, in resisting the insidious and imperceptible approaches of vanity. It is scarcely possible to paint in too strong colours the hazard which, on her first entrance upon the public stage of the world, a young female runs, of being influenced by flattery; even when it proceeds from those whose understandings she cannot respect. In such a case, she ought to esteem herself most happy, if Providence has blessed her with a judicious parent, to whom she can open her whole heart, and on whose advice she can place implicit reliance. True, *that*

parent will view her with partial eyes, but at the same time with too deep a zeal for her temporal and eternal happiness, to overlook errors, by which either may be endangered. The daughter, therefore, should early accustom herself to confide in her mother, before any other adviser; to look upon concealment towards her as a crime; and to seek her aid in forming correct opinions of all the specious novelties of early life. In the ensuing pages, will be traced the different conduct of two sisters, in this important particular. Both enjoy the same advantages in early youth; neither is destitute of affection, or filial respect towards her mother; but on launching into new scenes, and encountering unforeseen temptations and excitements, the difference of their mutual dispositions, becomes apparent in their behaviour and its consequences. These the Author has endeavoured to pourtray simply, but correctly. She does not aim at that brilliancy of imagination, or those charms of style, which so highly distinguish some of her contemporaries; but if the incidents which serve to develop the respective characters of Maria and Julia, shall be deemed not improbable, and the result shall be thought conformable in each instance to a just view of human nature, she will be satisfied that she cannot wholly have failed in her humble attempt to blend instruction with amusement.

In the present, as in some former instances, she has chosen Scotland for the principal scene of her story, from a wish to convey to her English readers some idea of the manners and habits of their northern neighbours, and to impress them, at least in a small degree, with the grandeur of Scottish scenery. The characters of *Margaret* and *Jane*, are faithfully copied from the Author's own observation of the women of that rank in her native country; and the terror excited by the *Kelpie*, is little more than a recollection of that which was imprinted on her own mind, in early life, by an unhappy creature that for many years wandered about the country.

MARTHA BLACKFORD.

ARTHUR MONTEITH.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a bright and lovely morning when Arthur Monteith, as yet known only by the name of Mathieson, bade farewell to the scenes of his youth. Handsome, accomplished, and chosen at the early age of seventeen as aide-de-camp, by so distinguished an officer as General Beaumont, fancy might perhaps have whispered to him, that in leaving Scotland for India, he was entering on a career of honourable ambition and of future fame. But neither the animating features of the landscape, nor the warmth of youthful hope, could, for many hours, dispel the sadness which dwelt upon his mind, in parting, perhaps for ever, from his dear friends at the farmhouse of Lochmore, and at the elegant mansion of Glenlyn.

Arthur's departure had rendered each of these places a scene of sorrow. At Lochmore, were JANE MATHIESON, his supposed mother, and Annie, who believed herself to be his sister, both of them absorbed in grief for his loss, and both fondly cherishing the remembrance of his constant prudence and tenderness. At Glenlyn, was Mrs. Beaumont, and her visitors, William Mathieson, Jessie, Allen, and Jamie, all in various degrees affected at losing the society of one whom they so justly esteemed. Mrs. Beaumont looked, with sickness of heart, to the prospect of a long separation from her beloved husband, the general; but this circumstance did not prevent her from sympathizing deeply with the friends of our young hero. Jessie, Allen, and Jamie felt as it was natural to feel for one whom they all regarded as a brother, though in fact he bore that relation only to the two former. But the most acute sufferer was William Mathieson, his preserver, and almost more than parent. While the carriage in which the general and Arthur were seated, was receding rapidly from Glenlyn, William stood gazing uncon-

sciously after it, as if stunned with the violence of his grief; Allen and Jamie were both drowned in tears, at his side; and the sobs and moans of poor Jessie, were heard even at that distance, by them all.

“Father,” at last said Allen, “Arthur desired us to comfort Jessie. We must not, therefore, allow ourselves to add to her grief, by letting her see us in tears. I will go up to her first, and you and Jamie will, I hope, soon be able to follow me.” “We must remember that we have mourners too at home,” said Jamie. “I thank you, Allen, for recalling to my recollection that our duty does not allow us to waste time in tears.”

“Oh, what do I not owe that dear boy,” exclaimed William, “for having trained my son to think and act in the way he does! All that I have ever done for him, is tenfold repaid.”

He pressed Jamie in his arms, saying, “go home, my love, to your mother. Allen and I will go up to Mrs. Beaumont, and Jessie. Tell my wife, that as soon as we can leave them composed, we will return to her.”

"I cannot go, father, without seeing Jessie. I must, if possible, learn that she is better, before I return to my mother."

"Well, well, then, Jamie, run up, but don't stay long, as your mother requires you at home, more than Jessie can do here."

Mrs. Beaumont was almost in as great distress as poor Jessie; but in a little while she overcame, in some degree, her grief, and entered into conversation with William. When he left her, she begged that he would allow Allen to remain with them that day. "And, indeed, my friend," continued she, "you must spare him to us very often; or I do not know what will become of us. He shall not spend his time in idleness, I promise you: poor dear Arthur never did, but seemed to improve every day, all the years he has lived with us."

William assured her that Allen should always be at her service, when not occupied at school. He then promised, at her request, to bring his wife and Annie, to spend the next day with her, as it happened to be Sunday; and though upon

ordinary occasions, they never went out on that day except to church ; he thought now, that it would be good for them all to be together, at such a time of affliction. Great was Jane's astonishment, when this was communicated to her ; for though she had often been invited to come to Glenlyn, her husband had uniformly made her find some excuse.

“ It is not suitable, my dear Jane, for either a farmer or his wife, to sit at the same table with their master and mistress : and neither is it proper for the father and mother of their adopted niece, to eat with their servants. I never will agree to either ; and therefore, though it is kindly meant in the laird and his lady, to ask us to visit them, we are much better at home, and can see our dear Jessie more properly in our own cottage.”

Such had uniformly been William's reasoning ; and therefore Jane had some cause for surprise, when he told her he had settled that she should spend the next day at Glenlyn.

“ I thought you would be surprised, my dear, but circumstances alter every thing.

Had we gone formerly to visit the lady, all the country would have been making their remarks upon our pride, and the laird's folly in raising us beyond our proper station in life ; but going at such a time as this, when every one must know, that both the lady, and we, her dependants, are suffering from the same cause, will only appear like good Christians endeavouring to comfort one another. In the lady, it will look as if she condescended to associate with us, to comfort us for the loss of our son ; and in us, as if we went to the house only in the hope, that through her we might strengthen our boy's interest with the colonel, and incline her to give us every information she receives of him."

Allen remained all the morning at Glenlyn, and with great difficulty Mrs. Beaumont prevailed on him to dine with her ; but the moment the dinner was over, he said he was under the necessity of going a little way on the Linton road before he returned home, and therefore hoped she would excuse his leaving her directly. When he was gone, Jessie was so much worn-out with her weeping and distress in the morning, that her aunt prevailed on her to lie down for

an hour ; and as soon as Mrs. Beaumont saw her safely in bed, she retired to her own dressing room, meaning to indulge in the grief she had so long struggled to restrain. She opened the door, and having fastened it, in order to avoid surprise, she advanced towards the table, but started on coming near it, for there lay a similar note to that in the beggar's bag of pebbles.

She eagerly took it up, and after reading it, exclaimed aloud : " Now, indeed, he has kept his word with me, and I am richly rewarded for any kindness I have ever shown, either to Jessie or Arthur ; but how strange it appears, that through them I should receive my beloved father's pardon, after the lapse of so many years, without my ever having heard his name mentioned, and after having fully believed that he was no longer an inhabitant of this world. I can, however, doubt no longer ; this is his hand writing and seal, and if any thing could have reconciled me to the parting from my Charles, the assurance of being pardoned and blessed by my still dear parent, was the only thing that could have made me willingly submit to the sacrifice."

“No wonder,” thought she, as she sat ruminating in her chair, “that Arthur’s manner and acquirements surprised us all so much. The pupil of SIR ALEXANDER M’DONALD, for five years, must have surpassed all other lads, either in this neighbourhood, or any where else ; and, oh ! what a comfort to me now, to reflect that Charles has the benefit of such a companion ! For my sake, as well as for that of his instructor, he will watch over my husband’s health and interest. Far different will be his affection, from that which any other individual in his place could have shown ; and whilst he has life, he will be to us a son.”

In due time a packet arrived from the travellers, to gladden the hearts of their anxious friends. It contained letters to all of them, though Allen’s was much more bulky than any of the others. To Jessie, Arthur sent a small miniature picture of himself ; telling her, that as he had given Annie a keep-sake before he left her, he now wished to do the same to her ; and as he knew that she had a very handsome Bible already, he had thought that his picture would please her better

than any thing else. Jessie's delight at receiving so acceptable a present, was unbounded; and indeed her pleasure was nearly equalled by that of all connected with the original, who were never tired of looking on a resemblance, that seemed to bring their dear boy so forcibly to their recollection.

The colonel (or as we must now call him, the general) told Mrs. Beaumont, that every day reconciled him more and more to her choice of an aide-de-camp for him; and he only wished that she had been the person to choose the other officer who attended him in a similar capacity; for the young man to whom he found himself compelled by powerful reasons to give that situation, was very inferior to Arthur, both in appearance and acquirements.

"MONTEITH, however (for that is his name, continued the general), may turn out better than I at present expect. His father I never liked; but his mother, who was a distant relation of mine, was an excellent woman; and she was completely sacrificed in becoming the wife of such a man. She died some years ago, report says, of a broken

heart, leaving this boy, and one girl, the only heirs to the large estate which her husband acquired, by the forfeiture and death of his nephew, Hector Monteith. Poor Hector, whom you must recollect to have seen at your father's a little while before our marriage, was unfortunately seized after the late rebellion, and executed at Carlisle!"

Mrs. Beaumont was delighted with the satisfaction expressed by her husband, at having Arthur with him, and told William what he had said, the first time she saw him. William started on her naming Monteith, and turned to the window to conceal the agitation which such a piece of information naturally produced; but Mrs. Beaumont having no suspicion of the cause, went on talking and relating all she recollected of the young man's father, declaring that she could scarcely forgive the general, for having any connection with the son of so bad a man.

William was glad when he could with propriety take leave; for the agitation that this news produced, made him wish earnestly to enjoy a little quiet reflection before

he determined on what course to pursue. After quitting Mrs. Beaumont, he walked for several hours in the glen, hesitating whether it would not be better for him at once to write to Arthur, and advise him to give up his commission and return directly to Lochmore, rather than allow him to become the associate of the son of Colonel Monteith ; but at last it struck him, that by so doing, he might produce the very evil he wished to avoid ; for should the colonel's attention be drawn to Arthur, he would learn that the latter was the reputed son of William Mathieson, and this name would be enough to give so artful a man, a clue to the truth. Having therefore convinced himself, that it would be more prudent for Arthur to continue under General Beaumont's protection, he determined in his next letter to him, to enforce more strongly than ever the necessity of his saying nothing whatever on the subject of his birth, and to trust to Providence for the event.

“ He has been the peculiar care of Providence all his life, poor boy, (thought William) and I trust he will not now be forsaken ; perhaps it may be for some good

purpose that his cousin is made his associate ; and what appears to a short-sighted mortal like me to be an evil, may be intended as the means of bringing about his restoration to his rightful inheritance."

William wrote the very next day to Arthur ; and having done so, endeavoured to banish from his mind the recollection of a circumstance that had given him at first so much uneasiness. General Beaumont and his suit sailed for India, and for many months their friends heard nothing of them, as in those days the voyage was much more tedious than it is now. At last, the joyful information arrived of their safety, which spread a ray of pleasure on every face around Glenlyn. Arthur, according to William's particular request, wrote him a long account of all that had occurred to him during the voyage. Towards the end of his letter, he mentioned Colin Monteith, as follows :

" He is greatly to be pitied, poor fellow ! for no one has ever taken the slightest trouble to give him instruction, on the subject of all others the most necessary for the happiness and good conduct of a human being.

A little smattering of Greek and Latin, with abundance of frivolous acquirements, have occupied the whole of his time ; and he fancies, that by ridiculing and holding up to contempt both religion itself, and those who profess to be followers of its laws, he shows his superior wit and understanding ; whereas, in fact, he only exposes his own ignorance, and becomes an object of real pity to those he affects to despise. All this, however, is a profound secret to General Beaumont ; as Monteith has sense enough to discover, that his creed would not raise him in the opinion of our worthy commander ; and therefore he never enters on such topics, but when he is sure the general is safely lodged in his hammock, or engaged at such a distance from him, that he runs no danger of being surprised."

"The intercourse I have had with this young man, has increased, if possible, my feeling of thankfulness and gratitude to Providence, for having placed me under the care of my dear and ever valued parents at Lochmore, who, from the earliest moment I can remember, taught me to depend on

God alone for assistance and comfort, in every situation in which I could be placed ; and convinced me, that while I made his laws the rule of my every thought and action, I need fear neither prosperity nor adversity. How much richer a man do I consider myself, in possession of the hope they have taught me to rely on, than if they had given me what poor Colin Monteith has the prospect, I understand, of inheriting, an estate some where in Scotland, of more than three thousand pounds a year !”

William shed tears of thankfulness, on reading those sentiments from the boy he had reared ; and in the joy of his heart, thinking to make Mr. Brown a participator in his satisfaction, by letting him know how much his pupil valued the instructions which the worthy clergyman (as William thought) had so greatly contributed to give him. He therefore put the letter in his pocket, and walking over in the evening to the Manse, read to him the above extract.

Mr. Brown sincerely congratulated him on the sentiments of his son ; adding, that it was only what he had expected from Arthur’s whole conduct, ever since he had

first known him. William, impelled by gratitude, let fall some expressions, which showed, that he thought the formation of Arthur's mind for the last five years of his stay at home, was principally owing to the care of Mr. Brown. The latter begged him to explain what he meant, and was much astonished to find himself looked upon as Arthur's preceptor ; nor was William less so, on discovering that the minister had never given the lad the slightest assistance in his studies, except occasionally examining him as to his progress in Latin and Greek, and directing him in the choice of proper books to read for his improvement.

“ It is very odd,” said William at last ; “ and what he could mean by the conversation he had with me the evening before he left me, I do not at all understand ; but he then told me, that he was not at liberty to say more than that he had had great advantages ; I shall therefore never seek an explanation, either of him or of any one else, till he gives it to me of his own accord, which I am confident he will, as soon as he is at liberty to do so ; and you will greatly oblige me, dear sir, if you will promise

never to mention the conversation we have just had together ; for Arthur might with good reason be offended at my betraying the confidence he had reposed in me."

Mr. Brown promised secrecy, and kept his word, though he often reflected upon what William had communicated to him, and wondered at himself, for having been so easily deceived into the belief of Arthur's self-taught progress, considering the superiority of his acquirements.

Years meantime rolled on, and many changes were taking place among our young friends. Allen had attended the University for three years, and was fast rising into manhood. His manners and conversation were nearly as polished and genteel as his brother's had been ; and his mind almost equally as well informed, though in point of ability he was certainly inferior. Old Robert still lived, and clung to Allen with the same degree of attachment that he had formerly felt for Arthur. Yet he never forgot his first friend, and only prayed that he might be allowed to see him once more before he yielded up a life, which through his means had been rendered not only sup-

portable, but even happy, and which, without his accidental introduction to the Ravine, would have probably fallen a sacrifice to cheerlessness and solitude. Mrs. Beaumont had regularly every month, from the time of the general's departure, found upon her table a note from her father, containing an assurance of his health and happiness, and often expressing strong approbation of her conduct towards Allen and Jessie, as well as of the retired life she led during her husband's absence.

Those notes were always conveyed to her hand in a most mysterious manner, and at first excited her curiosity and watchfulness to a most painful degree; but at last, on observing that in proportion as she gave way to these feelings, the notes were either discontinued, or came at greater distances of time, she determined to give up all idea of discovering what, if she succeeded, would evidently offend her father. From the time she took this judicious resolution, the notes became much more regular, and were written more cheerfully and kindly. The comfort she derived from knowing that her father was near enough to watch over

her, and approve her conduct, tended greatly to reconcile her to the protracted absence of the general, who in his last despatches said that he should yet be detained some years before he could honourably quit his command. He spoke in the highest possible terms of Arthur, who had just obtained a majority by the death of his superior officer.

“His conduct is beyond any praise I can bestow upon it,” wrote he; “brave, heroic, and fearless in action, he is at the same time, in society, the gentleman and the scholar; and in all situations into which he is thrown, he is the devout and pious Christian; never allowing himself to be either bantered or laughed out of what he believes to be his duty to his Maker, or to his fellow men. I suspect he has had a great deal of annoyance from that foolish, unprincipled lad, Colin Monteith, who, in spite of all the admonitions I can give, and all the restrictions I can impose upon him, will, I am afraid, both ruin his health and character beyond all power of recovery. I have written to his father, entreating him to allow Colin to return to England; but even the health of his only son, has no

weight, when put against the chance of gaining, through him, a few lacs of rupees, by way of prize money. God knows, if he were to share in the division, according to his merits, a nut-shell would easily hold all they would entitle him to ; but as his rank, and not his worth, will determine his proportion of the spoil, he will probably carry off much more than those who deserve ten times as much as he does."

Arthur, in all his letters, mentioned the kindness and affection he met with from General Beaumont. Sometimes he spoke of Colin Monteith ; but gradually his name became more rarely found in his letters ; and even when it did appear, it was merely to say, that he went on much as he had ever done, and that he greatly doubted whether he would live to inherit the wealth his father appeared so anxious to heap up for him.

Jamie was now thought old enough to be associated with his father in the farm business, to which he applied as steadily and actively as could be wished ; a great relief to William, who had now a very large property to manage, having been ap-

pointed by the general, before his departure, to overlook all the land that he had usually farmed himself, but which was much too great a concern to be left upon Mrs. Beaumont's hands. It had flourished almost beyond example, under William's management; and Mrs. Beaumont, in her letters to her husband, constantly did justice to the unremitting care and conscientious conduct of the honest farmer.

Jessie and Annie were, by this time, nearly seventeen; Jessie being said to be one year older than Annie, though, in fact, there was scarcely three months between their ages. Jessie had grown up tall, and elegant in her person, with features perfectly regular and beautiful; her complexion was fair, with a profusion of bright, glossy, auburn hair; the expression of her countenance was rather singular; and no one could examine it carefully, without discovering that her beauty was her least charm. Her understanding was strong and highly cultivated, her temper even, and her disposition cheerful; above all, her principles and habits were so fixed in truth and purity, that they threw a lustre around

all her actions, far beyond what is commonly seen in young women of her age. Devotedly attached to Mrs. Beaumont, she yet never forgot what she owed to her parents at Lochmore; and the day must have been stormy indeed, that could have kept her from visiting her mother, now confined to her chair by a violent attack of rheumatism.

Annie was not near so tall as Jessie; her complexion was clear, though her hair was jet black; she had large hazel eyes, with long black lashes, and all her other features were handsome and interesting. The delicacy of her appearance, often seriously alarmed Mrs. Beaumont for her health; and as she advanced in years, this fear rather increased than diminished. Pious and virtuous, she was the comfort and solace of her parents' lives, and on her Jessie's whole confidence and love were fixed. True to the promise she had given in childhood, Jessie never thought of entering into any amusement or enjoyment, without soliciting her father to permit Annie to share it with her; and in return, Annie's whole earthly happiness was cen-

tered in Jessie; for the affection she felt for her parents, was so mixed up with attachment to her sister, that to separate them, even in thought, was impossible.

CHAPTER II.

DURING her mother's illness, Annie had had a long continued time of fatigue and anxiety; and though shared as much as possible by Jessie, yet still it materially affected her health, and increased the uneasiness which Mrs. Beaumont had for some time felt on that account. She had walked down one morning to Glenlyn, merely to get a little air, while Jessie sat with her mother. When she entered Mrs. Beaumont's room, she looked so pale and exhausted, that her kind friend could not help asking her if she felt ill, or had any particular complaint.

“No, dear madam, I have no regular complaint, though to you I have wished to mention what is the conviction of my own mind—I firmly believe that I am not long for this world. A feeling of weakness and inward sinking, has been for some months

growing upon me ; yet I have no formed illness ; and so far as I can recollect, from having seen so much of Janet Finlay, I am exactly in the same sort of decline that at last carried her off. The fear of alarming my dear mother, in her present weak state, has prevented me from mentioning to any one my own opinion ; but I feel it must be done soon, or the truth may break upon the minds of my parents and sister so suddenly, as to endanger their precious lives. You see, dear Mrs. Beaumont," continued she, faintly smiling, " what a conceited girl I am, notwithstanding all your care and instruction ; but our family are so knit in the bonds of true affection, that a separation between us will, if not cautiously communicated, go hard with us all. My own mind, thanks to those who have trained me in the paths of righteousness, is in some degree prepared for whatever is the will of my heavenly Father. Yet the thought of the distress which my death will occasion in the family, almost distracts my mind from the serious reflection which every sinful creature ought to bestow on the near prospect of so great a change. I have, there-

fore, ventured to come at last to you, and to solicit that you would break the matter to my father and dear Jessie. They love me too well to make me a witness of their first sufferings; and after a few hours reflection, I hope we may meet and part no more, till the hour that I am called into the presence of my Maker."

Mrs. Beaumont at first listened with composure to Annie's history of her feelings; but as it went on, she burst into an agony of tears, and could scarcely command herself sufficiently to answer her. Annie seemed prepared for this: she did not shed a tear, though her lips trembled a little as she said, "Dear, dear, madam, spare me, if possible; I have much to go through, and if I do not school my feelings to some degree of subjection, they will hasten on the event, before my parents are prepared to bear it."

Completely recalled to self-possession by this mild appeal, Mrs. Beaumont instantly dried up her tears; and then endeavoured, by examining the dear girl as to the symptoms of her malady, to understand fully the degree of danger she

was really in. All she told her, tended to alarm her ; but she insisted on applying instantly for medical advice. " I must see your father, Annie, this very evening ; and I think with his help I can manage to take you to Edinburgh, without exciting any suspicion in your mother's mind ; it would be very wrong to alarm her in her present weak state, at least till we have ascertained the extent of the threatened danger."

" I thank you sincerely, my dear madam, for this consideration of my poor mother's feelings. If you and my father wish me to go to Edinburgh for advice, I shall make no opposition to the plan. Life has many charms to one so blest with friends and relatives as I am ; and, therefore, to refuse compliance with any means pointed out by them as likely to re-establish my health, would be both foolish and wicked. Yet, I own I have no hope myself, that any thing can now save me ; and though I will comply with whatever is advised, I shall keep steadily in view the termination which I believe to be inevitable."

After a good deal of conversation, Mrs. Beaumont said, that till they had had me-

dical advice, none of her family should be informed of her illness, except her father.

“It would be only harassing the minds of your brothers and Jessie, to make them acquainted with the object of our journey. Till we know the result, I shall tell them that I have business which may detain me a week or ten days ; and that as you have never seen Edinburgh, I prefer taking you with me, and leaving Jessie (who has been there often) to take care of your mother.”

This being settled, Mrs. Beaumont proposed walking home with her. Annie agreed, and they set out ; but had only gone a very short way, when they were forced to stop, to allow the poor girl to rest, as the least exertion almost deprived her of breath. With much difficulty Mrs. Beaumont contrived at last to get her home, where Jessie had been busily engaged at her work on a little stool, by the side of her mother, singing at the same time the beautiful airs of her native country. She had just finished “Lewie Gordon,” when looking up, she observed her mother drowned in tears.

“What is the matter, dear mother ?” ex-

claimed she ; “ Has my foolish music made you cry ? ”

“ It has indeed, dear girl,” answered Jane, looking earnestly at her ; “ for, oh ! how forcibly has it brought to my recollection the last time I heard my own dear lady sing that very song ! ”

“ And who was your own lady ? ” asked Jessie. “ I have often heard you express your attachment to some lady, but I do not remember ever hearing you mention her name.”

“ Hush, Jessie, ask me no questions,” said Jane in a whisper ; “ I have done wrong in even mentioning that I ever had a lady. William would never forgive me, if he knew that I had been so imprudent ; but you are scarcely less dear to me than she was. God forbid that you should ever be the cause of so much care and grief, as she, poor soul ! was the innocent means of bringing on her servant ! ”

At that moment, Mrs. Beaumont and Annie entered the house, and put an end to a conversation, which Jane, for many weeks, regretted she had ever been led into ; but finding that Jessie never recurred to it, she

gradually began to hope that she had forgotten all that had then passed. This was, however, very far from being the case ; but though the circumstances mentioned so mysteriously, had greatly excited Jessie's curiosity, her sense of rectitude and honour made her repress all enquiries upon the subject, as she thought it would be unpardonable in her to press her mother to disclose what she distinctly told her would offend her father.

Annie, in order to avoid the observation of her mother, retired into the next room, and reclined upon her bed ; whilst Mrs. Beaumont sat chatting with Jane, to give her daughter time to recover from the effects of the exertion she had gone through. When Mrs. Beaumont rose to go, she left a message with Jane for William, desiring to see him that evening. She then begged that Jessie would get her bonnet, and come away at once, as she had some idea of going into Edinburgh the next day, and had several things to arrange at home, in which she should want her assistance. As they walked on their way home, she said, " Jessie, my dear, Annie has been greatly fatigued

during your mother's illness. I think if I can persuade your father to allow her to go with me to-morrow, a little change will be of service to her, and her affectionate attention during so long a period of illness, deserves some reward. You will, I am sure, not object to take her place at the cottage, for the few days she will be away."

"Certainly not, dear aunt. On the contrary, it will give me the greatest possible pleasure, to have her enjoy a little relaxation from the fatigue she even yet has with my mother; but I fear that you will find it more difficult than you imagine, to prevail with my father to allow her to accompany you, or to permit me to remain in the cottage. I have urged every thing I could think of, to induce him to permit me to stay and share Annie's nightly fatigue; for to own the truth, I have for some weeks been quite sensible that it was too much for her health; but nothing I have been able to say, would make him listen a moment to the proposal; though I believe since I have spoken to him, he has taken the whole care of my mother during the night upon himself, in the fear that it was injuring Annie's health."

“ I think, nevertheless, that I shall prevail,” replied her aunt. “ Your father cannot be so unreasonable as to refuse *my* request, whatever he might do as to your’s. But there is Mr. Brown ; I should not be much surprised if he had been to Linton, and had brought our letters from the post, as he knew that he would be here an hour sooner than little Tom.”

Mrs. Beaumont was right. Mr. Brown was the bearer of a large dispatch from India. After pressing him to dine with her, she left him, in order to examine her husband’s letter ; and was soon followed by Jessie, eager to hear of her ever loved Arthur. Having given her a packet from him, Mrs. Beaumont shut herself into her dressing room, and proceeded to read her own. After relating all the various occurrences that he thought were likely to interest her, the general continued, “ Arthur is still the comfort and solace of my present banishment. No son could more completely devote himself to my service than he does ; and he really often makes me proud to be connected with him. His conduct was so exemplary during our late cam-

paign, that I have reported it to government ; and if the praise of his commander, and the testimony of all his brother officers, have any weight, he is likely to be a very rising man. What particularly drew forth this strong recommendation, was the following circumstance.

“The evening before the last engagement, one of the scouts that I had dispatched to reconnoitre the enemy’s position, returned hastily, and told me that there was a small post lately fortified, which, if not taken, would effectually prevent our advancing in sufficient strength to attack the town. It was of the utmost importance, I immediately saw, either to get possession of this post before the hour when the soldiers were to begin to move, or at least to conceal from them the difficulty they were likely to encounter.

“The only troops I could spare, were those under the command of Colin Monteith ; and though I had no great opinion either of his courage or of his judgment, I had no alternative but to send him forward with directions to storm the post, and get possession of it at all hazards. I therefore sent for him, to give

him his instructions. It was some time before he came to me. When he arrived, it was nearly dusk, and I had lain down, overcome with the heat and fatigue of the day, on the couch in my tent ; I raised myself on my elbow, and enquired what had occasioned his delay in answering my summons. He stammered something about being asleep, much as he used to do when reprimanded for any fault. I then proceeded to state why I had sent for him, and told him fairly that I was afraid it was rather a dangerous duty ; but that I hoped he would, both for his honour, and the preservation of his own life, act with prudence and circumspection ; and if he had the good fortune to succeed in taking the post, he might depend on my using my interest for his immediate promotion.

“ He made no answer, but by a bow, as in token of obedience ; but before quitting the tent, he sprang forward, and kneeling before my couch, kissed my hand, while he placed his hat over his eyes to prevent, as I thought, my seeing the tears which I felt moistened his cheek. Much affected, I spoke kindly to him, hoping that the next

time we met, he would have raised his name as a soldier, and increased the desire I had ever felt to serve him.

“ I saw him no more, as he instantly departed, covering his face with his handkerchief. The next morning, on enquiring for Arthur, his servant said that he had left his tent, and was with the troops, who were now in motion. During the battle, I was surprised that I never saw him ; and my astonishment was greatly heightened by perceiving Colin Monteith in Arthur’s cap and uniform, endeavouring to escape from the sword of a native soldier ; I made at the black fellow, and having succeeded in rescuing Monteith, I loudly enquired how he came to be there, instead of being with his detachment where I had sent him ? He hesitated, and stammered so much, that I could make nothing of him ; but as I was convinced that he had by some means evaded the dangerous enterprise, I ordered him into the rear, till I should be at leisure to examine into the business. We were fast approaching upon the town ; and whatever had been the fate of the fortified post, it was now too late to attempt to retreat.

With fear and apprehension, I continued to advance, expecting every moment that a fire would be opened on our flank from this post, which I now perceived completely commanded the principal gate that we had to force ; but to my great relief, as soon as we drew near it, the English colours were hoisted, and a volley was fired over the gate into the town. This had the happiest effect, as it intimidated the besieged, and gave our troops, who were nearly exhausted with fatigue, fresh spirits. The result was soon visible. The enemy fled in all directions, leaving their walls almost deserted ; and before evening, we found ourselves in quiet possession of the town, with much less bloodshed than we had dared to anticipate.

“As soon as the immediate hurry and confusion had in some degree abated, I became seriously alarmed at seeing nothing of Arthur ; and began to make enquiries regarding him, among the officers of his regiment. All looked confused, as if unwilling to speak ; when at last one of them stepped forward, and said, that all they knew of Major Mathieson was, that

the evening before, whilst they were sitting together in the tent where they had dined, a message was sent from me to Captain Monteith, desiring to see him directly. We were greatly alarmed (continued the narrator) on hearing this message, as the fact was, that Monteith had become quite intoxicated, and had been carried to his bed only a few minutes before the message arrived; but Major Mathieson, more collected than any of us, answered, tell the general I will be with him immediately; the messenger left us, and we all asked what he meant by sending such an answer? 'I mean, gentlemen,' answered he, 'to try to save this infatuated young man from certain disgrace. General Beaumont, the very last time the same thing happened, solemnly declared to him, in my presence, that if he ever knew of his again being guilty of such conduct, during the time he was on service, he would instantly place him under arrest, and send him to Madras to be tried by a court martial. I dare say the general has nothing very particular to communicate to him at present, and, perhaps, only wishes to keep his eye upon him. I will, therefore,

make an attempt to pass for him ; I am nearly of the same age and height, and some folks even say we bear a resemblance to each other. I think he is so much overcome by liquor, that I may easily take his coat and hat, and as it is getting dusk, I hope I may succeed in saving him this time.' He left the tent, and after a few minutes, returned, dressed in Monteith's coat buttoned close round him, as the other was accustomed to wear it. 'None of you, I hope,' said he, 'will ever betray this secret, as my attempt would then be of no service ; and it really appears painful to think of this poor young man's being disgraced and turned out of the regiment, if we can prevent it.' All promised silence, provided it led to no misfortune to himself ; and throughout this eventful day, we have kept our word, hoping that Mathieson would appear when the battle was over ; but now that he is not to be found, I do not think I am bound to conceal the truth any longer ; for perhaps the orders you gave him, believing him to be Monteith, may explain the meaning of his absence.

"It does indeed," answered I, "and I

now know whom we have all to thank for the ease with which we got possession of the town. I gave, as I thought, the command of the detachment to Monteith, and was highly displeased to see him with the army; as I never doubted that he had entrusted the care of the expedition to Campbell, his next in command, who is an active young man, and naturally wishes for an opportunity of distinguishing himself.

“I instantly sent to enquire if Arthur was in safety. In about an hour afterwards he was brought in, in a litter, having received a wound in his shoulder in storming the post. This wound he had the resolution to conceal for several hours, in which time he had completely dislodged the enemy, and had taken every precaution for keeping possession of the place, till our troops came up to attack the town. Till then, he ordered that no signal should be given of its having changed its masters, as he hoped that the appearance of the English colours, might, if well timed, strike a panic into the enemy, which would greatly facilitate the fall of the town. All turned

out as he had foreseen ; but almost as soon as the army came in sight, he had fainted from loss of blood, and fatigue, and was carried into a small guard house, and laid on a mattress, where he had continued till my messenger arrived. I had him instantly placed in an apartment near my own, and his wound examined by a skilful surgeon ; who relieved my mind greatly, by reporting that it was not dangerous, though by being so long left undressed, it might give him some months confinement.

“ His prophecy has in some degree been fulfilled ; for though it is now nearly three months since the taking of the town, Arthur is yet not strong enough to be put upon active duty ; but he is gaining strength daily, and there is no reason for his father making himself at all uneasy about him, as I have no doubt that in a few weeks he will be perfectly restored to health. At his earnest request, I have so far forgiven Monteith, as to allow him to retire from the army, without bringing him to a court martial. He will return to England by the next ship. How his father will relish the letter I have written concerning him,

I cannot say ; but it was quite impossible to act more leniently than I have done. I cannot yet exactly inform you what share of prize money will fall to us, but it must be very considerable. Arthur has not only the prospect of being promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, but likewise of getting a very handsome fortune, sufficient to make him independent for life."

"I am glad that this letter has come to day," thought Mrs. Beaumont, as she folded it up ; it will help to comfort poor William under the great affliction which is too surely falling upon him." She put up her dispatches, and joined Jessie, who was musing over the account her brother gave her, of his having been wounded.

"O, foolish girl !" said Mrs. Beaumont, "how can you think of crying now, when you are assured of Arthur's safety, and of all the honours that are likely to be showered upon him ? We shall have him among us, a rich nabob, before we know where we are ; and see," continued she, glancing over the letter Jessie still held in her hand, "a confirmation of what I am saying ; for he tells you here, that this silly lad, Colin

Monteith, is entrusted with shawls, and I don't know what, as presents to all his friends. Really, I think I shall wear a shawl of his presenting, with greater pride than I ever did any piece of finery in my life. He is a soldier of my own making ; and even Beaumont writes, he is proud to be connected with him."

"Ah! dear aunt," answered Jessie, "my tears flow, believe me, in thankfulness to God, for having preserved a life so precious to us all. You know not how much depends on his returning here in safety ; but I am thoroughly convinced, from observations I cannot help making, that my dear father's life depends on Arthur's. He never showed partiality to any of us in his conduct, when we were all with him ; but since my brother has been gone, I have observed even his very name, mentioned suddenly, makes the blood desert his cheek ; and the tremulous quivering of his voice in asking about the news, when you have had letters, too plainly shows how much his heart is in his eldest son. And no wonder that it should be so, for Arthur is one among ten thousand. From his

earliest days he has outstripped every boy in the village; and even I, who must feel very differently from his father, believe that the future happiness of my life must depend greatly on him."

Mrs. Beaumont kissed her cheek, saying it was, indeed, not surprising that all his friends looked up to him for comfort and happiness. "You shall go in the evening, my dear, and cheer the hearts of your mother and Annie with the news, and carry your brothers their letters. Allen's is a very large packet, and contains I dare say a great deal of confidential information. I shall, however, keep your father's, and give it him myself, as I expect him here during the time of your absence."

Jessie left Glenlyn early in the evening; and she had been gone but a very little while, when her father called on Mrs. Beaumont. With caution, she informed him of her fears regarding poor Annie's health; and proposed the plan she had settled, for getting the best advice for her immediately. He was at first greatly shocked, and could scarcely believe that Mrs. Beaumont had not exaggerated her

danger ; but after hearing all the circumstances, he bowed his head upon his breast, and said, “ God’s will be done, if it really so should seem best, to try his servants by this great and unlooked for affliction ! We have been mercifully dealt with in all other trials, and received many multiplied blessings at His hand ; why should we not bear chastening with patience and resignation ? My dear child’s early death will no doubt greatly afflict us who are left behind ; but for herself, her loss will be great gain. As far as a sinful mortal can be said to be pure, she, of all my family, is the most faultless. Mild, pious, and dutiful, she has grown up in the fear of God, and in uniform obedience to her parents ; beloved and respected by all who knew her, charitable and kind to those who required her assistance ! To such a spirit, death can have few terrors ; but, oh ! the agony of losing such a child, can only be known and felt by those who must meet it.”

Poor William’s resolution here gave way, and he burst into a flood of tears. Mrs. Beaumont thought it best not to attempt to interrupt him, as she hoped they would

relieve him ; and she was right ; for after a few minutes he recovered himself, and holding out his hand to her, said, “ Pardon, dear madam, my distressing you by my weakness ; I will act in future, believe me, as becomes a Christian father ; but nature must feel, and that most deeply, at such a time. I will retire for an hour or two, to enable me to meet my poor wife with composure ; as I quite approve of your plan of concealing from her my child’s illness, till we are sure of the extent of her danger. Then, indeed, if your fears are just, we must break it to her as gently as we can ; and God enable her to support the afflicting information ! ”

“ Stay, my friend,” said Mrs. Beaumont to him as he rose to leave her, “ I have been so unfortunate, as to be obliged to give you much pain by what I have thought necessary for you to be informed of, regarding one dear child ; I have now a cordial in reserve for you, in what relates to another. Here are dispatches from the general, in which he speaks in the highest possible terms of our dear boy, who will soon be a colonel, and rich enough to re-

turn and comfort his parents for the rest of their lives. Here are his own letters, and if you will be seated for a few minutes, I will read you what the general says of him." She then read what we have already related. William's agitation as she went on became almost insupportable; and at the account of his wound, he fell back in his chair nearly fainting. Mrs. Beaumont hastened to assure him of his son's safety and success. He clasped his hands in thankfulness, and in an under tone said, "His death I might have bore, if it had so pleased God; but to have fallen in such a course, would have been more, I fear, than either my resolution or strength could have endured. I thank God, however, there is an end to my apprehensions on that account! These young men are now separated for life."

Mrs. Beaumont was at first surprised, but afterwards supposed that Arthur had been more communicative with regard to the character of his fellow soldier, Colin Monteith, to his father or brothers, than he had been to her, and therefore imagined that William was pleased to find they were finally separated. He now took leave, and

retired into the woods which surrounded Glenlyn, endeavouring, by prayer and reflection, to fortify his mind against the storm which threatened him.

Next morning, Mrs. Beaumont drove to Lochmore for Annie, on her way to Edinburgh. She brought Jessie with her; and told Jane she meant to exchange daughters for a week, as William had agreed to allow Annie to go with her to see a little of the world.

“I am very glad of it,” answered Jane, “I hope it will do her good; for some how, I think of late she has been looking very pale, and has been less cheerful than she commonly is; but William tells me he is going with you himself, if you will allow him, as he has some business about the last year’s hay to settle; and he thinks this is so good an opportunity, he would like to take it. Jessie and I can manage very well together till you return.” “O yes, dear aunt,” said Jessie, “we shall get on nicely; it is quite a treat to me to be allowed to spend a few days with my mother and brothers; we shall all be as merry and happy as possible.”

William now came from the other room, ready equipped for the journey. "I ask your pardon, madam, for being so bold as to propose going with you; but I really have business; and if you could only take me within a few miles of Edinburgh, I can walk the rest of the way, without being seen by any one in your carriage."

"Come then, William," answered Mrs. Beaumont, "I shall never be ashamed, believe me, to be seen to have an honest man by my side." On getting to Edinburgh, they lost no time in obtaining the best advice it afforded for Annie. Alas! the physicians could give them no hopes of her recovery. Her case was declared to be a confirmed decline; and though, with care, she might linger on a few months, it would be next to a miracle, if there should be any permanent amendment.

Annie, who insisted on knowing exactly what was their opinions, only smiled when informed of it; and leaning her head on her father's shoulders, said, "Oh! weep not for me, my beloved parent. I trust, that in the mercy of God I may be pardoned,

and received, through the intercession of his dear Son, into everlasting peace; there, in his good time, to be again united to all I now must leave on earth, who are so dear to me. In my brothers and dear Jessie, I am sure you will find comforters and supporters in your old age, who will abundantly supply my loss; but it is from you alone, that my mother can receive support in this season of affliction; and I freely own, it is the fear of witnessing her grief, that alone makes me a coward. Oh! in pity to my weakness, exert your strong and virtuous mind, to save me, as far as you possibly can, from that agony; for I dread it more than I can well express, and perhaps more than a dying Christian should permit any worldly trial to affect her."

"My child! my child!" exclaimed her poor father, clasping her to his breast, "you show me the path of duty which I ought and will pursue. Fear no suffering on the part either of your mother or myself, that I can guard you from; and though the trial is, if possible, more severe, from knowing the great worth of the dear child we must, I fear, lose; yet we will remember,

in our grief, that from God we received her; and bless him, even now, when he again requires her at our hands."

Mrs. Beaumont remained nearly a fortnight in Edinburgh, in the vain hope, that Annie might receive benefit from constant medical attendance. William, meanwhile, had been persuaded to return to Lochmore, Mrs. Beaumont promising to give him daily information how his dear child went on. At last, finding that there was little or no change, or if any, that it was for the worse, she, at Annie's request, agreed to return to Glenlyn with her; but settled with her father, that till his wife had been informed of her daughter's danger, and had, in some degree, recovered from the first shock that such intelligence must naturally give her, Annie should remain under her care. This plan, when communicated to the poor invalid, appeared greatly to relieve her mind. She grasped Mrs. Beaumont's hand, saying, "What a blessing, dear madam, have you been to us all, from the first evening of our acquaintance. In comfort and happiness have we

lived ever since ; and now, in the hour of trial, you do not forsake us."

"Never, my dear Annie, shall I forsake, never shall I forget her, who has so largely contributed to my happiness and comfort in the retired life I have led. I have for many years been your instructress, and never, in one single instance, have had reason to regret my taking on me the arduous employment. Now our situations are changed ; for now my prayer to God is to be able to profit by the example you set, in showing me the fruits of an humble, pious, and religious life, when laid on a sick bed, and looking forward to the grave."

Annie was quite exhausted by the journey ; and for some days after her return to Glenlyn, she was unable to leave her bed. During this time, the scene that was passing at Lochmore was truly affecting. Jane's health had been nearly re-established, before it became necessary to inform her of her daughter's danger. She bore it better than William had expected, at first ; but the restraint that she put upon herself before him, produced a

fever, which laid her again in her bed. Jessie's grief, on the contrary, was ungovernable for a few hours; but she was too sensible a girl to allow herself to indulge long in useless sorrow. She, therefore, listened in the evening to her father's arguments; and by the next morning had schooled her feelings so far, as to be able to go to Glenlyn, and see Annie with apparent composure. She then returned to her poor mother; and for nearly a week was never able to leave her. At last, the fever left Jane; and Jessie rejoiced to see that her mind was in some degree reconciled to what she feared was rapidly approaching.

Annie had become extremely anxious to be allowed to return to Lochmore; and though, from the exhaustion which even the moving from one room to another produced, her friends feared what she must suffer in so much longer a passage; she yet seemed so much set upon dying in her father's house, that they were unwilling to refuse her that melancholy gratification. As soon, therefore, as William thought his wife could bear to see her, she was removed

home in the carriage, and laid upon her little bed, which, for some days, it was doubtful if she would ever leave again. She did, however, revive, at the end of a week ; and for nearly a month afterwards, was able to be removed, every day, into the next room, and laid on a sofa, which Mrs. Beaumont had kindly sent her from Glenlyn. During the whole period, from her return to Lochmore, Jessie never quitted her, except through the night, when her aunt and father made a point of her returning to sleep at Glenlyn. The idea of the kind girl's catching the infection, was so strongly impressed upon her aunt's mind, that she trembled even to allow her to be with her so much through the day. William, to whom she ventured to hint her fears, had none on the subject. Annie's family, by the mother's side, had been consumptive, and therefore her illness was not surprising ; but he knew well, though he could not tell Mrs. Beaumont so, that all Jessie's family had been remarkably healthy, and inherited no such unhappy constitution. He was, therefore, easy on her account, and allowed her to

be with his daughter, in the day time, as much as she pleased. The conduct of Allen and Jamie, during this long illness of their sister, was most exemplary. No attention, of whatever kind, was spared, that they thought could, in any way, alleviate her sufferings. Day after day did Allen sit by her couch, reading the Scriptures, and explaining to her any text on which she expressed a wish for information; and never did he, even by an impatient look, appear to be tired of the employment. Jamie would walk for miles, in search of any dainty he could think of to tempt her sickly appetite; and deemed himself amply rewarded by the look of affection that was sure to greet him on his return.

Jessie sat constantly at the side of the couch, her hand clasped in her sister's; who, whenever she had strength to speak, conversed with her on religious subjects; pointing out with fervour, the great advantages they had reaped from having been blessed with parents and friends, who had not only instilled into their young minds a knowledge of divine truths, but had led

them, both by precept and example, to practise all Christian duties fitted to their age; till by constant habit, and the conviction of their more ripened years, they were able to follow the footsteps of their Redeemer, in all meekness and lowliness of mind, with a firm faith in his love and mercy.

“Be steady, my beloved Jessie,” said she, one day, “in pursuing the race you have begun, whatever temptations may yet be thrown in your way. Remember always, that without perseverance in godliness, there can be no safety for a Christian; and that when the hour of death draws nigh, no cordial can so powerfully soothe the sinking spirit, as the assurance of having made your peace with God, and kept fast your reliance on the merits of your Saviour.”

Jessie composedly thanked her sister, promising faithfully, that through life she would religiously attend to her advice. “I have a commission, dear Jessie,” answered Annie, “which I must leave to you to execute. Alas! it is not permitted me to do it myself; for I have tried once or twice to sit up long enough to write, but

my strength fails. It is to take leave of my dear Arthur. He is the only one of my friends who is now absent ; but though at so great a distance, tell him, dear sister, that he has never been out of my thoughts, and that my prayers have been offered up for him, constantly, morning and evening, from the day we have been separated. Tell him (because I know it will comfort him), that I have been greatly supported through my long illness, by the Holy Spirit ; and greatly assisted in my preparations for my awful change, by the kindness and superior knowledge of our dear Allen, who has enlightened my mind, and encouraged my heart, by explaining the great truths of the Gospel more fully, than my own limited acquirements allowed me to do. And when my brother returns to comfort the declining years of his parents, and to gladden the hearts of you all, give him this Bible, as the last gift of a sister who loved him with the truest affection, and who prays that it may conduce as much to his comfort in his latter days, as it has done to lighten the pains of her own."

Her lips slightly quivered as she finished

the last sentence, and for some minutes she was silent; then opening her eyes, she spoke again: "Another request, dear Jessie, I have still to make; for I would rather explain my wishes fully to you, than to any one else; and I do not wish, after this time, to allow my thoughts to mix again with earthly cares. When the last awful debt is paid, will you, my sister, cut from my head a lock of my hair; divide it into parts, and when you can spare as much of your pocket money as to pay for it, get them inclosed in small plain lockets, with merely my initials on them. Give them to my parents and brothers, as a small memorandum of Annie, whom they all loved so dearly. Mrs. Beaumont has already got my last legacy to my sister, which she will give you when all is over. Will you promise me, Jessie, to do this? It is in the hope that by daily seeing these little remembrances, their thoughts may be the oftener recalled to the time when they must prepare to follow me, that I have wished them to wear them; for then I shall be of service to them, even in the grave."

Jessie pressed her hand to her lips, and answered, "I promise you, my beloved sister, to fulfil your slightest wish, in this, and all other points, as faithfully as if you were still in being."

"Enough, dear Jessie. When my father comes home, leave us for a few minutes together; but do not stay more than a quarter of an hour from the room; that will be long enough for us both to bear such an interview."

Jessie did as she had been requested, and William went to his daughter, where one of the most gratifying moments of his life, though the most difficult and painful to sustain, was prepared for him. Annie said, she had sent for him to tell him herself, that she felt convinced her end was now rapidly approaching, and to beg that he would, in the way he thought best, prepare her mother for what a few hours would infallibly produce. She thanked him, in the warmest and most affectionate terms, for all the tenderness and care he had bestowed on her; entreated him to forgive her, for whatever omissions she had been guilty of during her life; and then

requested that he would, for the last time, bestow on her a father's blessing.

William was too much awed by the astonishing and beautiful composure of the dying girl, to refuse complying with her request; though his heart felt pained, almost to bursting. He knelt down by her side, and prayed that he might be enabled to fulfil the duties of a parent to his dying child; and then placing his hand on her head, which was meekly bent down towards him, he pronounced his blessing, and prayed that the pains of death might be lightened to his dutiful and obedient child.

Annie merely answered, "Amen, my father!" and from that moment was silent for several hours. Towards morning she opened her eyes; when seeing her mother and Mrs. Beaumont watching by her, whilst Allen was on his knees by her bedside, she held out her hand, and said, "My mother, behold the death of the Christian you have reared. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

She was again silent ; but in a few minutes she grasped Mrs. Beaumont's hand hastily, saying, " Lord Jesus receive my spirit !" and sunk down upon her pillow, a lifeless corpse.

Poor Jane instantly fainted ; she was gently raised from the bed on which she had fallen, and carried into her own room by Allen, who continued to watch by her till she revived, when he was rejoiced to see her burst into an agony of tears, and in a few minutes ventured to leave her, and return to assist in comforting his equally dear father, who, from the moment of his child's death, had sat almost insensible in a chair by the side of her bed. Allen spoke to him for a considerable time, without being able to rouse him ; till fearing to allow him to remain longer in that state, he said. " Father, let us pray that our end may be like hers." William instantly rose, and kneeled down, while Allen prayed for a few minutes in a most impressive manner, for grace to be enabled to prepare for death, and that comfort might visit the house of affliction.

When they rose from their knees, William had regained his usual composure, and

kissing Allen, said, "My son, I thank you ; I am now, through your means, what a suffering Christian ought to be—submissive to the will of God."

CHAPTER III.

FOR many months after this afflicting event took place, the family at Lochmore continued to mourn over their beloved and amiable child; but their grief was tempered with resignation; and in the course of time, though Annie could never be forgotten, yet they recovered their cheerfulness, and felt, in conversing on her peculiar virtues and character, a degree of pleasure that none but the parents of a Christian child can ever either feel or understand. Jessie had fulfilled her sister's wishes with regard to the lockets, which were now worn in the bosoms of her parents and brothers; while Jessie herself had received from Mrs. Beaumont a small miniature that Annie had sat for during the time she had remained in Edinburgh.

Three years passed away after Annie's death, and General (now Sir Charles) Beau-

mont was still in India. His last letters, however, mentioned his hopes of being able to sail for England by the next fleet. "Whenever," wrote he, "I return to England, Arthur shall accompany me ; for I am now so attached to him, that I really never could consent to part with him ; and as his regiment is likely to continue here some years longer, he has written home for leave to exchange into another that is stationed in Europe. I think, however, I shall prevail on him to quit the army altogether, and reside in our neighbourhood, if he can find a small estate that will be near Glenlyn and Lochmore. Tell Allen from me, that as soon as he has taken orders, I shall find means to fix him in a living near enough for us to have his society ; we shall then have nothing more to think of for our children, but to find a husband for Jessie, who will be contented to live amongst us, for I will never consent to her removal from the circle I hope to see formed around us in our old age. I had almost forgot to mention to you, that a very extraordinary circumstance occurred to me a few days ago, which I cannot account for in any other

way, than by supposing that you carry on a private correspondence with Arthur; and yet I know not how that can be either, for the writing was not your's. I went hastily one morning into his room, when he was busy writing to England. I stood talking to him about some business I wished to consult him on, when my eyes fell upon a large packet, on which was a seal that instantly attracted my whole attention. I suppose my sudden stopping in what I was saying, surprised him; for he looked up, and seeing the direction my eyes were in, he snatched up the packet, and was putting it into his pocket, when I caught his hand. 'Tell me, Arthur, from whom you received that letter? Your answer is of great consequence to my happiness.'

" 'Pardon me, general,' answered he, 'if I refuse to answer that question further than by saying, that it was conveyed to my hands through my brother Allen. More I am not at liberty to inform, even you; and therefore you will oblige me extremely by pressing me no further on the subject.' 'This is extraordinary, Arthur. That seal belonged to my wife's father, Sir Alexander M'Donald;

and since his death, I have never seen it. Indeed, till now, I always believed that it had been lost with him, in the little vessel which foundered at sea, when he was endeavouring to make his escape after the fatal battle of Culloden; for he was persuaded (contrary, I am confident, to his own judgment) to hazard both his fortune and life in the cause of the House of Stewart. Will you at least allow me to examine the seal, to convince myself whether I am right in saying it is Sir Alexander's?

“‘No, my dear general, I cannot even do that, consistently with what I think right. I have acted unpardonably in leaving to the power of chance its ever being seen; and I can only be reconciled to myself again, by your promising never to mention the subject to me.’

“I found I could gain nothing; and, therefore, desisted from further enquiries; but the accident, my dear Mary, has affected me more than I can well tell you. Is it possible, that by any chance you have possession of this family seal? Do, my love, answer me truly; for if it is not in your hands, I will move heaven and earth to

regain what, in fact, no one but ourselves is entitled to keep possession of, and which is invaluable to me, as the only relic that I know of, which remains of my much valued and ever lamented uncle." Lady Beaumont was greatly distressed at this discovery made by Sir Charles. The seal was one that she knew was too remarkable for him not to recognize immediately. It was a head of Prince Charles Stewart, the Pretender, in a highland bonnet, and broad sword, with the cross of St. George on his left shoulder, and bearing the inscription, *suum cuique*; in English, "His own to every man."

To attempt to deceive her husband, she knew would be vain. She would have given the world to have been able to consult her father what answer to make; but even yet she had discovered no means of conveying intelligence to him, though she saw by his notes, that he was acquainted with all the events that occurred in her house. After rejecting a thousand answers that rose to her mind, she resolved to mention before Allen and Jessie, that her husband had been much surprised with the

sight of a seal, sent on a packet from Allen, and to ask him if he knew any thing about it. This she put in practice the very next day. Allen, however, took no notice of her question, but turning hastily to Jessie, said, "I must go, dear sister, for my father expects me home early ; good evening, ma'am, I shall see your ladyship to-morrow."

"Good evening, Allen ; recollect I must write to-morrow to India."

Allen came the next evening, but had only remained a few minutes, when he again seemed to recollect something to take him away, and hastily ran off before Lady Beaumont had time to ask him any questions.

She remained buried in thought for some time after he was gone ; when Jessie starting up, said, "Who can that be on the stairs?" and opening the door, was astonished to see Allen on the landing place. He placed his finger on his lip, as a token of silence, and then glided softly down stairs. Jessie did not understand his reason ; but she saw he wished to conceal from her aunt that he had been there. She therefore said nothing when she returned to her seat, and

Lady Beaumont, who was deeply engaged in her own reflections, never even knew that Jessie had risen.

In the evening, when they retired to their respective rooms, Lady Beaumont found on her table a note from her father ; it contained the following words :

“ The general, I understand, has seen my *seal*. No doubt it has surprised him ; and it would have been better if Arthur had been more careful. However, we must now do the best we can, and satisfy his enquiries, by telling him a part of the truth, though not the whole. Write to him and say, that you have not the seal in your own possession ; but that you received this information in strict confidence before he left the country ; that for the present, you know who has it, and you are satisfied that it should remain where it is, as you are certain in a few years, or perhaps sooner, it will be honestly restored to you without the possibility of a disappointment. Desire him not to question Arthur upon the subject, as his honour is pledged never to reveal who is in possession of that seal.”

Lady Beaumont immediately sat down

and wrote to her husband, to the effect of the above note, well pleased that she was enabled to answer his question, at least according to the known wishes of her father. This was the last of her correspondence with India; for late in the summer she received a letter from Sir Charles, informing her of his safe arrival at Portsmouth, in company with Arthur, who was then writing to his father, and was in perfect health. Great was the joy that this pleasing information gave to all at Glenlyn and Lochmore; and they waited with the utmost impatience to see the beloved travellers restored to their native country, after so long an absence. A whole week passed before another letter arrived. One at last came from Sir Charles. He said that he had been greatly agitated on his arrival in London, by receiving a summons from Colin Monteith, to come immediately to him at Richmond, where he said his father lay at the point of death, and that he himself was, he firmly believed, fast following him.

“I could not, my dear Mary,” continued Sir Charles, “impatient as I am to get to you, refuse the request of a dying man. — I,

therefore, left town instantly, carrying Arthur with me, as Colin particularly expressed a wish to see Colonel Mathieson. What a scene have we been witnesses to ! And, oh ! my dear wife, what a lesson it ought to be to all those who fear not God, and despise his precepts ! On our arrival at Richmond, we enquired for Colin, and were instantly shown into his bed-room, where we found him reclining on the bed, the absolute spectre of the young man we had formerly known. He rose the moment he saw us, and advancing to me, said, ‘Sir Charles, my father has been wounded in a duel, and is pronounced to be drawing near his end. His own violence and irritability have greatly accelerated his fate ; for he has never ceased raving since he received his wound. In every interval of pain, he calls for you, declaring that he cannot die till he has seen you ; and as I learnt, by accident, that you were in England, I have taken the liberty to send for you, in hopes that your presence may have the power of quieting his mind, and comforting him in his last moments.’ I answered, that I was entirely ignorant of any business Colonel

Monteith could have with me ; but that I was ready to afford him any comfort that lay in my power, if he was serious in wishing to see me.

“ ‘ I will let him know that you have arrived, Sir Charles ; meantime, may I request that you will remain here with Colonel Mathieson, till my return ? ’ He left the room, but returned in a very few minutes, begging that I would follow him instantly to his father. I found the colonel supported in his bed by pillows, his face bloated, and his eyes sunk. The moment he caught sight of me, he screamed loudly for me to come forward, and hear his confession. I advanced towards him, wondering what I could possibly have to do in any of his concerns.

“ ‘ Beaumont ! ’ exclaimed he, ‘ I have much to say to you, and much to hear from you ; but leave us, boy,’ turning to Colin ; ‘ you are the cause of my present sufferings, and have been a curse to me from your birth even till now, when on your account I am hurried so prematurely to the grave.’

“ Greatly shocked, I begged the unhappy man to compose himself ; I would answer

any questions he wished to put to me, and do any thing in my power either to serve him or his son. At the same time I entreated Colin to leave us, and promised to call him when our business was finished.

“As he left the room, his father’s eyes glared wildly after him, and pointing with his finger, he said, ‘There, Beaumont, is the cause of all the crimes I have committed. A fatal ambition took possession of my mind, from the moment he was born, and led me at last to perpetrate even robbery and *murder* to gratify it.’

“ ‘Good God ! Monteith,’ exclaimed I, ‘you are then the murderer of Hector’s children?’

“ ‘No, no,’ returned he, ‘that crime I have been kept from committing, by means that appear almost supernatural. I have for some time past suspected, that you were the person who saved them from my grasp ; and it is partly on that account that I have longed to see you, and question you on their fate ; but though I am free from the actual guilt of dipping my hands in their blood, am I less criminal in having mur-

dered their father and mother, and thrown the helpless orphans upon the world, to starve, or to be beholden only to the charity of strangers? Listen to my tale; and then, if you can find any hope for mercy to so great a sinner, in the creed I know you profess, exert your prayers that a few more years may be granted to me to repent, and repair the injuries I have done both to them and to you.

“ ‘ My elder brother and I were, as you know, brought up together. When young, we were as good friends as boys being so exactly alike, would naturally be; but as we advanced towards manhood, a very visible change took place in my father’s conduct and conversation towards us. Arthur was treated with much greater attention than I was. Great deference was paid to his opinions; and if I presumed to differ from him, I was told, that it was my duty to yield implicitly to the wishes and directions of my elder brother. In short, it soon became so extremely irksome to me, to be obliged to submit on all occasions to the pleasure of the young *laird*, that I resolved to free myself from the bondage, by quitting

my paternal home. This was not very easy for me to accomplish, as my father had set his heart on my being bred to the bar ; but as I had great influence over Arthur in private, I prevailed on him to intercede with my father, that I might enter the army. In this, he at last with great difficulty succeeded ; hoping that he was not only gratifying my wish of becoming a soldier, but binding still closer the bonds of brotherly love and affection, which he believed to have always subsisted between us.

“ ‘ At the age of nineteen I quitted Monteith, inwardly hating the very brother who had been the means of my emancipation. At parting, Arthur earnestly begged, that if I should ever require more liberal means of subsisting, as my father’s son and his brother ought to do, than what my commission and the allowance now settled on me afforded, I would apply directly to him, for the supply of my wants.

“ ‘ This was certainly meant in kindness by him ; but it appeared very differently to my jaundiced mind ; and I swore, as I

crossed the threshold of Monteith House, rather to starve, beg, or even steal, than ever subject myself to the mean necessity of accepting assistance from one, who, I conceived, had not only secured the possession of my father's wealth, by coming into the world a few months before me, but had likewise, by his artful and flattering attentions to him, entirely alienated his affections and love from me, and fixed them wholly upon himself.

“ ‘ From that day, I never once had the slightest connection with my father, farther than receiving a few letters from him, which I never answered. Arthur wrote, and wrote again, entreating that I would explain, at least to him, the nature of the offence I had conceived against my family ; but his letters were likewise disregarded ; and the regiment to which I belonged being ordered on foreign service, I had no opportunity of hearing of any of them for ten years. Meanwhile, from the wish at first of being able to keep myself free from debt, lest I should be under the necessity of applying to Arthur for assistance, I gradually became so excessively fond of money, that

at last there was nothing, however mean or unprincipled, that I scrupled to do for its attainment. Eager for promotion, as a means of increasing my wealth, I put myself forward in all the various engagements in which I was employed, so as to attract the attention of my superior officers ; who, in justice, as they said, to my known courage, promoted me repeatedly, though, in their hearts, I know they despised every other feature of my character. By the time I returned to England with the regiment, I bore the rank of captain, and had saved a considerable sum of money, both from the accumulation of my pay, and from the prize money which I had gained ; besides which, I had contrived to buy up the shares from young thoughtless lads, who were willing to part with any chance of future payment, for a little ready money.

“ ‘ On my arrival in England, I learned that my father was dead, and my brother married to a very beautiful and amiable young woman, of some considerable fortune, in the country. The news was gall and wormwood to me, and suggested the idea of going down, on pretence of visiting him,

and spying out whether I could by any means disturb his happiness. Accordingly I applied for six months leave of absence ; having obtained it, I set out for Scotland, where I arrived a few weeks after the birth of my niece Isabella, now Lady Nairn. Hector was nearly five years old at the time. It is impossible for me to describe the hatred and detestation with which I regarded this innocent child, whom I swore I would ruin by some means or other, whatever might be the consequence. I found, however, at this time, my intentions unexpectedly frustrated, in a manner I had not anticipated. On my arrival at Monteith, I had been received with the greatest kindness and hospitality by Arthur, and his young and beautiful wife ; and after remaining a week or two with them, in order to reconnoitre on what grounds I had to work, I perceived that I still possessed the same influence as formerly, over my brother ; and therefore I had little doubt, that in a short while I should be able to persuade him to separate Hector from his mother, which was the main object I had in view ; as I had resolved, that through him the blow I meditated should come.

“ ‘I had only begun in a very gentle way to throw out hints that the boy would be ruined by indulgence, if left to his mother’s direction, when I was most disagreeably surprised one day on going into the parlour, by seeing Sir Alexander M’Donald, of Dun-Evan, (your wife’s father, Sir Charles) who was at that time a young man, about my own age, and had served abroad with me for several years. The moment I saw him, I became convinced that it was time for me to leave Monteith, as he had by accident become more acquainted with my real character, than any one else in the world; and I was persuaded he would as certainly unmask me to my brother, if he discovered the slightest trace of my intentions.

“ ‘His manner to me was cold and distant; and I fancied, that both my brother and his wife regarded me with less kindness than they had previously done. I, therefore, thought it best to retreat, in order to return at a time more auspicious for my purpose. The next morning, at breakfast, I pretended to have received sudden orders to repair to London; in

short, I set out that very evening for England, where in the course of a few months, I married the daughter of a rich jeweller in the city; and though the match was contrary to her father's wishes at first, we were soon not only forgiven, but received twenty thousand pounds by way of my wife's dowry, with a promise, if we conducted ourselves with propriety, of nearly twice as much more at his death.

“ ‘ Again I was ordered abroad; and, with my wife, sailed for America, where year after year passed on, without any hope of a return to our own country. My wife had no family, and the suspicion which I entertained, that on this account her father would leave his immense property to her sister, who was the mother of several children, made me almost detest the sight of her. Indeed, for several years before her death, after my hopes on that subject were at an end, no human creature could endure a life of greater suffering than she did. I almost at last grudged her both victuals and clothes; and I have little doubt that her death was brought about from deprivation of necessaries, added to the agony of a broken heart.

“ ‘ This event put a finishing stroke to all my hopes on her father’s property ; and, therefore, I redoubled, if possible, my miserly habits, in order to increase my worldly stores, in that way at least ; fully resolving to marry again the first opportunity I could do so with advantage. To have an heir to my wealth, I considered now indispensable, lest it should eventually descend to my hated brother and nephew. I had, however, no such opportunity for many years. The regiment was still abroad ; and I could not bear the idea of giving up my commission, even to insure success to my favourite scheme. At length, a letter containing information that nearly drove me distracted, made me resolve to find a wife, at all hazards, where I was, rather than be without an heir. It was written by a man of the name of M’Leod, who, from similarity of disposition, had been, at one time, my only intimate associate in the regiment, and had, by the death of his brother, become heir to an estate in the neighbourhood of Dun-Evan.

“ ‘ He wrote me a long account of the

illness and death of my brother's wife, which had so much affected Arthur, as to lay the foundation of a serious illness, that in the end carried him off, about three years previously to the date of his letter. Sir Alexander M'Donald, he informed me, had been appointed guardian to my nephew Hector, and his sister Isabella, the only children that had survived their parents. He added, that Hector, who was now of age, had, about a month before, married Miss Campbell, the beautiful niece of Sir Alexander; and that he had now gone to take possession of the estate of Monteith. Isabella was said to be engaged to Sir George Nairn; but her guardian thought that she was still too young to marry, and had stipulated with Sir George, before he would give his consent, that the marriage should not take place till the following summer.

“The rage that seized me, on reading this letter, knew no bounds; I resolved instantly to marry, and at least to have the chance of an heir for my own wealth, whatever course I might afterwards pursue. I paid my addresses to several young

women, daughters and sisters of the officers belonging to the English army; but they all, without exception, gave me a peremptory refusal; my character, as a husband, being too notorious to allow even my wealth to weigh with them in the scale. I then looked about among the inhabitants of New York, where we were stationed; but even there, I found the report of my former cruelty had put a bar to my success; at last, I paid my addresses to the daughter of a barber in a neighbouring village, who was little more than seventeen, and as vain as she was beautiful. I was readily accepted by herself, and found no difficulty in obtaining the consent of her father, who had a large family, and was glad to dispose of one of them so eligibly. We were, therefore, married, and in less than a year I became a father; but, alas! instead of a son, she presented me with a very sickly little girl, whom I soon hated almost as much as I had done Hector Monteith. Two years passed away, and I began to be in despair; this time I had no hope of losing my wife, for she was a stout, healthy young woman, who contrived to take her own way,

in spite of all my endeavours and authority.

Again I had the prospect of an heir; and during the whole time that this expectation lasted, she contrived so to alarm me for her health, and the safety of the child, that, wonderful as it may appear, she, under one pretence or another, absolutely extracted from me nearly four thousand pounds.

“At last, the long wished for hour arrived, that made me the father of a son. Never shall I forget the feelings that seized me on looking at the infant. That the detested Hector should stand between this adored boy and the estate of Monteith, was a thought which I could not endure; and I resolved, even the first night of his birth, to return to England, as soon as he could be removed with safety; for I resolved to insure his interest as the family heir, even if I should perish in the attempt.

“My wife appeared to recover from her confinement very slowly. She contrived to get the medical person who attended her, to insist on her suckling the young heir, both on account of her own health and that of the child; and during the time this lasted, the same system of

robbery went forward, (for I can call it by no other name) as had been done during the previous nine months. The slightest refusal to any of her requests, produced the greatest possible violence. I was instantly threatened by her mother with the child's death. At last, the time for Colin's being weaned, arrived. Mrs. Lewis, his grandmother, undertook the charge of him; and his mother went to her father's, to be out of his sight; for she declared that she could not endure the pain of hearing him cry, without indulging him in what would pacify his uneasiness.

“ ‘ A week passed, and the child had got over all his troubles. I wondered that my wife did not return home, and sent her a message to that effect; when a note was returned to me, written by herself the day she had gone to her mother's. It stated that she could endure to live with me no longer, and had quitted the country, never to return. She had left her son (she said) as an equivalent for all the money I had given her, which, she added, had in her opinion been hardly earned, by four years of misery and wretchedness. She con-

cluded by taking leave of me for ever ; promising faithfully never to annoy me in any way during her life, provided I did not resent her conduct on her parents, who had known nothing of her intention, till it was too late to prevent her from carrying it into execution.

“ ‘ I was at first in a dreadful rage at the perfidy of this worthless woman ; but by degrees I began to count the gain I was likely to derive from her desertion, and resolved to conceal her flight, till I could procure a passage for myself and children to England ; as I did not chuse to become the laughing stock of all my acquaintances, by the disclosure. I applied, the very next day, for leave of absence ; but this became unnecessary, as the regiment was ordered home, and I of course accompanied it.

“ ‘ It was three weeks before we embarked ; and in the course of that time, my domestic history had become public, and made me the jest of the whole place. The moment we reached London, I placed my daughter, who was three years old, under the care of an officer’s widow that I had known some-

thing of, and who now kept a school in the outskirts of the town. Colin was too precious a treasure to be allowed to be out of my sight; I, therefore, hired a servant to take care of him, and lived in a small lodging with him at Pimlico. I had been in town only a very few days, when M'Leod called on me, and related what a dreadful state of agitation there was in the public mind in Scotland, with regard to the Pretender; insomuch, that from circumstances which had come to his knowledge, he said he should not be surprised if a rising in the country were to be the consequence.

“How is Hector Monteith affected?” was my first question. ‘I believe,’ answered M'Leod, ‘that if he were left to himself, he would join the Stewart faction directly; but he is so ruled and managed by Sir Alexander M'Donald, that he will do nothing but what he advises.’

“We must set to work then, M'Leod, and endeavour to seduce M'Donald to take part in the rebellion. Do you not think that you could assist me in this? for positively I will leave no stone unturned, to effect both

his ruin, and that of my detested nephew. If I can but succeed in once getting them fairly into the field in the Stewart interest, then the estate of Monteith is mine, past a possibility of failure.

“ ‘ M‘Leod and I then set about contriving a plot, to work upon Sir Alexander’s feelings ; and after having settled all the particulars, he left me to put them in immediate execution, having first obtained my promise of ten thousand pounds, to be paid down the day I should enter into possession of the estate of Monteith. All succeeded beyond our most sanguine expectations. M‘Leod pretended to be himself a staunch friend of the Stewarts ; and for a great while went regularly to Sir Alexander, to consult him on the proper measures to ensure success. The latter, however, resisted every thing that M‘Leod proposed ; clearly shewing him the impracticability of the Pretender’s ever being able to succeed in the then state of Scotland, with plans so rash and ill digested. M‘Leod finding that he could make nothing of him in that way, appeared to acquiesce in his superior judgment, and wrote privately to me, that unless I could

supply him with some false documents to lay before Sir Alexander, we had no chance of either getting him or Hector to fall into the snare.

“ ‘ Not in the least discouraged, I instantly set to work, and forged letters as from persons of the first weight at the court of France, assuring the partizans of the Stewarts, that they should be supported, both with men and money, to an extent that must insure success.

“ ‘ Even for some days after M‘Leod had laid these letters before Sir Alexander, he still seemed to hesitate ; but his son, who was an enterprising young man, united in persuading him to join the rebels, and after some deliberation, he agreed to raise the vassals on his estate ; an example which, as you know, was eagerly followed by Hector Monteith. Meanwhile, the regiment to which I belonged, was ordered into Scotland, under the command of the Duke of Cumberland ; and during the short campaign of that summer, I distinguished myself in so marked a manner, as to gain his favour and support, which was of infinite service to me in the sequel.

““I now began to dread that M'Leod would betray my complicated treacheries, and resolved to take the first opportunity of destroying him. Such an occasion presented itself at the battle of Culloden, where he was stationed just before me; and whilst his attention was engaged with the approach of the enemy, I ran my sword through his body, and left him (as I firmly believed) dead on the spot.

““Immediately after the battle, I was dispatched by the duke, on some particular business, to Stirling. I rode post thither, and having effected my purpose, was returning slowly towards Dunblane, where I intended to sleep; when, in suddenly turning an angle of the road, I perceived you, Beaumont, in earnest conversation with two Highlandmen. What put it into my head I cannot say, but I determined to watch and discover who they were, and likewise what was the business you seemed so earnestly engaged in. I, therefore, leaped from my horse, and tying him up to a tree within the neighbouring plantation, crept softly under a wall that divided the road from the thicket, until I came near enough to dis-

cover what you were about. I dare say you remember what then passed. An old servant of Sir Alexander's, with his son, was begging you to conceal their master, till the first search should be over, and he could find an opportunity of making his escape. I learned, likewise, that Hector Monteith was with him; and I could scarcely conceal my delight, when I heard you promise to protect them, if they would instantly take shelter in the house of Mrs. Beaumont's nurse, where you would supply them with every thing that they might want, and procure a passage for them to France, as soon as you thought they could leave their retreat with safety.

““ You had no sooner quitted the men, and they had disappeared, than I remounted my horse; rode directly back to Stirling, and gave information where Sir Alexander and Hector were to be found; but I charged the governor to conceal who it was that gave the information, telling him that I had it from you, and that as you had married Sir Alexander's daughter, you could not properly appear in the business. A party was sent out to the nurse's house,

which was situated among the Ochill hills. The fugitives were seized, and marched off towards Stirling. On the road, a very heavy mist came on ; and Sir Alexander, complaining of fatigue, was allowed to sit down, for the purpose of resting himself, on the edge of one of the hills. He did so ; but taking advantage of the inattention of his guards, he laid himself at his length on the ground, and rolled (as you know boys in Scotland often do for sport) down the steep side of the hill. So rapidly did he descend, that he was out of sight before he was even missed ; and by the help of the thick fog, he completely escaped. Monteith, however, was carried prisoner to Stirling Castle ; where his wife and children joined him, and continued in confinement for nearly six months. Meanwhile, I contrived to exasperate the government, both against him and M'Donald. The latter, I have since heard, got in safety to Leith, but embarked there in a small leaky vessel which foundered at sea, and all on board perished.

“ Great exertions were made to obtain a pardon for Monteith ; but as I had gained the ear of the duke, no extenuation of his

crime was listened to, and I was promised the possession of the estate which had tempted me to the commission of so many crimes. Humanity, however, prompted the government to insist on a provision for the widow and children that he might leave; and I was obliged to come under a promise to allow them a small annuity, before I could obtain assurance of complete success. Under the power which this promise gave me, I determined to secure the persons of the widow and children, fully intending to take care that the latter should never reach an age that could give me any trouble. I hurried, with this view, down to Stirling, a day or two before I knew that Hector was to be removed to Carlisle; and I gave positive orders to the governor, not to suffer either Mrs. Monteith, or the children, to be liberated, till after Hector had left the prison.

“This injunction, I have reason to believe, was strictly obeyed; but in the morning, after Hector's departure, no one was to be found in his apartment, but Mrs. Monteith; and from that time till the present, so far as I know, it has never been dis-

covered how the three children were conveyed from the castle; their mother constantly, till the day of her death, refusing to give the slightest information concerning them. Most people, I believe, have given me the credit of having put them out of the way myself; but as I am a living man, Beaumont, I know no more of them than I have now related.

“ ‘ From the moment I succeeded in gaining the estate, all the enjoyment I had promised myself in its possession, vanished. I attempted at first to live there; and hired servants and a governess for my children, in the view of continuing to reside constantly in the country, as my father had done; but I soon found that Monteith was no place for me. My servants, one after another, quitted the house, declaring that they could not reside in a place, where the ghost of the former master continually walked. Not an individual of the neighbouring gentry, would visit or associate with me, and scarcely would meet me on business. In short, at the end of little more than three months, I was forced to leave Monteith and Scotland for ever.

“ ‘ I next took a house in London, and hired a tutor to educate my boy, who by this time was about five years old ; the man appeared willing to obey my directions in all things, and by this quality he soon succeeded in gaining so great an influence over me, that for many years he directed every thing in which I was concerned, my money excepted ; for on that point I was inflexible, and not even to him would I trust the management of a farthing. He was a worthless, debauched, unprincipled fellow, who corrupted my boy’s morals, and taught him every species of vice ; yet still, though I knew all this, I fancied, as he made him a good scholar, he had done his duty, and I constantly introduced him to all the society with which I myself mixed. Chance at last betrayed to me a plot he had formed, of marrying my son Colin to a daughter of his own, just the evening before it was fixed to take place. I instantly dismissed the wretch from my house ; obtained a commission in the army for Colin ; and through a personal friend of your own, got you to appoint him your aide-de-camp.

“ ‘Till the expedition sailed, I never suffered him to be out of my sight by day or night, and I felt relieved beyond description, when I was assured that you were gone. Whilst he remained in India, I gave way to every species of dissipation, merely in the hope of drowning thought; for the still small voice of conscience would be heard at every moment of solitude or reflection. Your entreaties that I would allow my son to return to England, vexed me exceedingly. I imagined that he had influenced you to apply to me for the permission; and that he still meant to fulfil his engagement with the daughter of his worthless tutor. At last, your letter announcing the necessity of his quitting the regiment, unless he would run the risk of being disgraced, convinced me, that all which you had before written was true. Mortified as I was with his conduct, I yet felt relieved that his attachment to the girl at home, was not the cause of his return; and I accordingly received him with real kindness and affection. He soon gave me a solemn promise, to hold no converse, either with her or her father; and I believe he kept his word in that par-

ticular, though from the time of his arrival in England, his extravagance and dissipation have been beyond any thing I even could have believed possible in a son of mine.

“ ‘ My daughter, likewise, has conspired to distract me, by eloping from the house of the lady where I had placed her, with a worthless fellow, an attorney, or rather I believe I ought to say, an attorney’s clerk, who has the impudence to expect that I will provide for her in future, and give him the means to become a fine gentleman. About a week ago, after having been up the greatest part of the night, drinking in company with an old set of debauched companions, on my return home I was met in the passage by Colin, who entreated that I would come with him for a few minutes into the parlour. I followed, loading him with abuse for troubling me at such an unseasonable moment. On approaching the light, however, I was struck with the expression of horror that was in his face, and asked hastily what was the matter ?

“ ‘ Answer me one question, dear sir, and I shall then know exactly what is to be

done. Do you know what was the fate of Hector Monteith's three children?

“ ‘The question sobered me in a moment. What do you mean, Colin, (answered I) by putting such a question to your father? I know nothing of the fate of these children; and almost involuntarily added, Oh, would to God that I did!’

“ ‘He grasped my hand; ‘I knew my father could not be a deliberate murderer.’

“ ‘Who has dared to accuse me? (roared I, stamping with rage) I will know, I insist upon it. Answer me directly.

“ ‘Colin, for some time, positively refused to explain the meaning of what he had said; but at last he confessed that he had passed the evening in a gaming house, where he had quarrelled with a man who attempted to cheat him. Words grew high, and he had challenged the man, whose name was M'Leod; but the challenge was insolently refused, M'Leod declaring that he never would submit to put himself on a footing with the son of a notorious murderer.

“ ‘At the name of M'Leod, I staggered back into a chair, nearly fainting. Colin,

who thought he read, in this agitation, a confirmation of my guilt, burst into tears, and kneeling at my feet, implored me to relieve him by an assurance that these children had not suffered through me. This I could most conscientiously do ; but, alas ! I was still a murderer ; though, from his having no suspicion of any other victim meant, but the children, my assurance quieted him ; and he declared that he would, ere another day passed over his head, force M'Leod to unsay his accusation, or fight him like a man. I applauded this resolution, though I privately determined to meet M'Leod myself before Colin could possibly find an opportunity to do so. With this intention, I advised him to go to bed, and sleep off the fumes of the liquor he had drank ; promising that I would accompany him myself the next day, in search of my accuser. He agreed, at last, to retire ; and I lost no time in repairing to the gaming house, where he said he had left M'Leod. There, surely enough, I met him coming out, just as I reached the door. I knew him instantly. It was the very man I had stabbed

at Culloden, and of whom, till that moment, I believed myself the murderer.

“ ‘ Ah, traitor ! is it you ? ’ exclaimed he, the moment he saw me. I am glad of it, for now I shall have my revenge. You thought me dead, no doubt, and yourself secure in your ill-gotten possessions ; but know that the brave Highlanders, against whom I had been fighting, saved my life, and carried me from the field, believing that I had been wounded in their cause. They took me with them to France, where I have learned better how to choose my friends, and likewise how to unmask a villain.

“ ‘ I heard no more ; but drew my sword, and made a lunge at him ; which he parried, and the next minute ran me through the body. On my falling, he made off, and I lay for a considerable time before I was discovered. Some one, at last, came up, and had me carried home ; where, on the landing place, Colin met me. The shock he received at that moment, added to the agitation he had undergone the evening before, was too much for his exhausted frame, worn out by dissipation

and profligacy. He burst a blood vessel in his lungs ; and, I am convinced, is now hurrying with rapid strides to the grave.

“If you, therefore, dear Beaumont, really know what was the fate of these children, in mercy tell me at once ; for I have resolved, as some little alleviation of my guilt, to leave them, if still alive, that estate, which has proved nothing to me but a source of crimes, of misery, and of never-ending remorse.”

“Thus ended the wretched man. I was, as you may suppose, greatly shocked at the relation of a life spent in the commission of such dreadful crimes. I tried, however, to answer him as composedly as I could ; assuring him of what was true, that though I had made every possible enquiry for Monteith’s children, I had never been able to make the slightest discovery relative to their fate, and had always believed that he had conveyed them, himself, from the Castle of Stirling, the same night that their father was removed. Again he solemnly assured me that he did not, and that he could not even

conjecture by what means they had so mysteriously disappeared.

“I then suggested the possibility of their being still alive, though concealed by some of their father’s friends, in the fear of his attempting any thing against them, and advised him by all means to make his will, restoring to them their father’s estate, if they should ever claim it, and be able to prove their identity. He willingly agreed to do this, and sent immediately for a solicitor, who, in my presence, drew up an instrument, leaving not only the estate of Monteith to any of them that may be still alive, but likewise (in the event of his son’s death) the greatest part of his personal property; he having consented, at my earnest entreaty, to bequeath five thousand pounds to his daughter.

“I expressed much surprise, on finding that his children were not his first wife’s, as I had till then believed them to be. She was, by her mother’s side, distantly related to my father; and it had been through that claim of relationship, that I had been prevailed upon to take Colin as my aide-de-camp.

“ ‘I found, on my return to England,’ answered he, ‘that it was not known when my first wife died; and as she was a respectable woman, I was willing to allow it to be believed that she was the mother of my children; for I never could bear to think of the despicable creature who gave them birth.’

“As soon as he had signed his will, I left him to try to get a little repose; and returned to Colin, whom I found so ill as to make me doubt even if he would survive his father. He had been engaged in conversation with Arthur the whole time of my stay with the colonel, and was now unable to speak. We saw him put to bed by his servant, and then walked out to the Inn together, desiring that if we were wanted, we should instantly be sent for. We were too much engaged with our own thoughts, to enter into conversation; and, as if by mutual agreement, retired to separate rooms, to reflect on what had passed between us and our respective invalids. I have thought that the above narrative would be most interesting to you, as it completely explains the accusing letter that you re-

ceived from your father, written before he so unfortunately embarked in the vessel at Leith. It has relieved my mind in a great degree, from the fear that by some inadvertency of my own, I might have been the means, however unintentionally, of betraying the secret of his concealment. Many years of misery this apprehension has occasioned me; and even yet I feel wretched, when I think that my beloved uncle died in the belief of my deliberate guilt. I shall not leave this place till I see the end of the wretched man; therefore, address me at the Star and Garter, Richmond, where we have, for the present, taken up our abode.

CHAPTER IV.

LADY BEAUMONT, on the receipt of this letter, was sitting in company with Allen and Jessie. William also had called in the evening, to enquire if she had heard any thing of the travellers. She read it aloud, to account to them for their having no letters themselves. William, the moment Colonel Monteith's name was mentioned, turned his chair round from Lady Beaumont, and leaning his elbow on the table, covered his face with his hand, and continued to listen with an intensity of feeling beyond description. When she came to the part where Sir Charles mentioned the manner in which Colonel Monteith had overheard the conversation of the Highlandmen with him, relative to Sir Alexander's place of concealment, her voice trembled, so that she could scarcely be heard; till Allen, who sat farthest from her,

sprung up, exclaiming, "Oh, Lady Beaumont ! let me hear this ; I know there must have been some great deception, and always have maintained it, in spite of all the facts that seemed so decisive."

"Bless you for that, my dear Allen ! you have been a friend indeed, when all else condemned us. She sank upon his shoulder, and remained drowned in tears for some minutes ; when raising herself, she smiled faintly in his face, and said, "Oh ! plead for me Allen, and let me for one moment be pressed to his arms again, and I will bless you while existence remains, or memory holds her seat."

Allen pressed her hand, and whispered caution ; which instantly recalled her to herself ; and turning to Jessie, who was observing them with astonishment, she said, "My love, Allen and I have had some confidential intercourse with regard to my father. The surprise of the moment has made us forget that we were not alone ; but still we are with friends, and need only say, that what has passed, must be confined to your own bosoms."

"Strange," said William, raising his

head, "that I should not have known you were the daughter of Sir Alexander M'Donald!"

"Did you know my father?" asked Lady Beaumont, in a quick voice.

"I have seen him, madam, many years ago; but never knew that Sir Charles was his nephew."

"Sir Charles is the son of his eldest sister, who married in England when very young. He never was in Scotland, till about five years before my father's death, when he spent a summer at Dun-Evan. During his stay there, we became attached to each other; but as he was in the army of the present king, my father positively refused to allow us to marry, as he thought it would greatly offend the friends of the Stewarts, with whom he was connected, and who had already shown some jealousy of his even receiving a visit from his nephew. Sir Charles left the country upon this refusal; but we still contrived to correspond together, and at last he prevailed on me to quit my father's house, and marry him privately. I almost hoped that my father was pleased at our having taken this step,

as it completely exonerated him from any blame. He had, I knew, a high opinion of Charles, both as a man, and a Christian; and would have willingly agreed to our marriage, had it only depended upon himself; but that, or any thing else, he would have sacrificed, rather than have excited the suspicions of his friends.

“I soon found that my hopes in this respect were not fallacious, as we received a letter of forgiveness very shortly after our marriage; but my dear father at the same time said, that he must refrain from holding intercourse with us, till the minds of his countrymen were more settled on political matters. For three years, from that period, we only heard about once a twelvemonth from him, and then merely received a few lines, to say that he was well. At last the unfortunate rebellion broke out. Our fears that my father would join in it, were but too soon confirmed. Charles, who was ordered upon duty, marched into Scotland with the Duke of Cumberland, and was with him at the battle of Culloden. Before he went, I entreated him, if he ever loved me, that he would exert all his in-

fluence to save my father. This he promised to do, and faithfully kept his word. During the heat of battle, he rescued him from the hands of a party of Colonel Monteith's regiment, who had surrounded him. He had no time to speak ; but appearing to take my father prisoner, he committed him to the care of an old servant, on whose fidelity he could rely. With this person he had previously settled to what place the dear captive should be conducted.

“Hector Monteith was taken with my father, and were carried off the field together, to the place appointed. The moment the battle was over, Charles contrived to be sent to Perth with dispatches ; which he had no sooner delivered, than he hurried to the rendezvous ; but before he reached it, he was met by my nurse's husband, who had removed my father to another place, as he suspected that they had been watched. This man was the bearer of a letter from my father, who said that he fully relied on his nephew's honour, and entreated him to make every exertion to secure his flight, as well as that of his friend, Hector Monteith. You know all the rest ; except that on under-

standing from the party that was sent to seize them, that it was Charles by whom they had been betrayed, he wrote a letter to me, full of bitterness, against the unpardonable treachery of my husband, declaring, that from that moment he disclaimed us both. The account of the shipwreck of the vessel in which we believed him to have embarked, soon followed the receipt of this dreadful letter; and from that time, my friends, even the consciousness of innocence has been insufficient to lighten the misery that the belief of his death occasioned us. This unlooked for explanation of the unhappy discovery, will, however, I trust, in time restore my dear husband's peace of mind, and lead to years of consolation and happiness."

Lady Beaumont having given this explanation, went on with her husband's letter. As soon as she had finished it, William rose and thanked her for the communication; and then turning to Allen, said, "Return home, my son, with me; I have something of consequence to arrange with you before I go to Edinburgh, where I must be early to-morrow morning. This

business of the lease must be settled before Sir Charles returns, for I cannot allow him to find me behind hand in any of the affairs committed to my charge."

"I am sure, William, he will only be astonished at your regularity, and the improvements you have effected during his absence. The estate has almost doubled its value, since you have had it in your hands. It will be quite impossible for him ever to repay you for the attention and trouble you have bestowed upon his concerns."

"We won't talk of obligations, dear madam; the general and I understand each other; that is all, and that is what every landlord and tenant cannot boast. Our obligations are mutual; and will be all settled, I trust, shortly. But good evening: I must go. Come, Allen, make haste; it is late."

Lady Beaumont regretted exceedingly that Allen was obliged to leave her; but she could not interfere, as his father said he had business with him. When they had departed, she kissed Jessie, saying, that the letter had agitated her a great deal, and, therefore, she would retire to her room for the rest of the evening.

William, during his walk to Lochmore, informed Allen that business which he could not mention, even to him, required his immediate presence in *London*. “I must see Sir Charles directly ; and, therefore, I mean to leave this place in a few hours ; but Lady Beaumont must not know where I am gone at present. I could have wished Allen to have taken you along with me ; but I know not how I can do that, without exciting her ladyship’s suspicion, and alarming her as to the nature of my business.”

Allen stopped hastily, and catching hold of his father’s arm, said, “I too, dear father, should wish of all things to go to London. Nay, I even doubt whether your business is of more consequence than mine ; but till you mentioned your desire of taking me with you, I had not dared even to admit the possibility of accomplishing it. Secrecy, however, is so essential with regard to my motives for going to London, that I am not at liberty to explain them, even to you. But if you write a note to Lady Beaumont, saying, that you have determined on carrying me with you to Edinburgh, she may naturally suppose you

intend to enquire about the next winter's classes at the University for me. This notion will satisfy her mind, for at least a week or ten days ; and I hope by that time I shall be able, either to write to her myself, and explain the reason of my absence, or else to leave London on my return home."

"I don't quite understand, Allen, what motive you can have, for wishing so earnestly to go to London ; unless, indeed, it is to see your dear brother, and that is not necessary to be kept a secret ; but as you do not ask me to explain my plans, I will not press for yours. Thanks be to God, my dear boy, I never yet had cause to distrust you ; and believe me, I will not now admit an injurious suspicion of your conduct into my mind. It is the reward, both of children and parents, who have lived together as we have done, that in times of even seeming mystery, they can fully, and unconditionally, trust to each other, without harbouring a doubt on either side. I will write the note you have suggested ; and you shall accompany me on my journey. May we both succeed in the business in which we are so much interested !"

“I thank you, my dear father, for this indulgence ; and believe me, that you never shall have cause to regret the reposing in me so unqualified a confidence. I must, however, claim your indulgence a little farther, and leave you for a couple of hours ; as the business which interests me so much, cannot be executed without some documents which I must procure before I return home. The time, I trust, will soon arrive, when I may be permitted to disclose all to you. Meanwhile, I can only say, that the secret is rather Arthur’s than mine ; and till I have seen him, I am bound by a solemn promise, never to let it pass my lips.”

“ Arthur, my dear Allen, is as incapable of acting improperly, as you are yourself ; therefore, if the secret relates to him, I have a double security of its propriety. Make haste, and secure your documents ; and I will go directly home, and prepare your mother and Jamie for our departure.”

Next morning, Lady Beaumont watched eagerly for a note from her father, which she made sure of receiving ; but no note arrived, nor did Allen return. In the

evening, Jamie called and delivered a few lines from William, that added greatly to her uneasiness; as she saw distinctly, that till Allen's return, she had no chance of any communication from Sir Alexander. Jamie could give her no idea about the time his father and brother meant to return, and remarked on leaving her, that she had better not expect them very soon, as lawyers were usually very dilatory, and William had said, that he would positively not come back without the lease.

The second day of their absence, she proposed to accompany Jessie in her usual morning visit to her mother. "I am glad you will go with me, dear aunt," answered Jessie; "for to tell you the truth, I did not think my mother quite like herself yesterday. She kissed me over and over again; asking me, if I were quite sure I should always love her, and never agree to leave her. My answers only made her cry, and say she was not worthy to be the mother of such a child."

"Your mother was low-spirited, I suppose, at being left alone. It is at such times, that the recollection of poor Annie

returns with redoubled poignancy. I must try to persuade her to spend the day with us; and Jamie can come for her in the evening." They then set out on their walk. They found Jane engaged at her spinning wheel; she looked pale, and her eyes were heavy. "What is the matter, dear mother?" asked Lady Beaumont, addressing her, as usual, by that family appellation. "Is any thing wrong, either with you or William? You look as if you had not slept."

"Oh, madam, I am quite well; only I am a little foolish, and cannot sleep for thinking of my dear child here, who will, no doubt, be going away now with her brother, who is come home so rich and grand; he will never let her stay with poor folks like us, I am sure."

"How can you admit such a thought into your mind, Jane, against such children as either Arthur or Jessie? Really, I must scold you for being so foolish as you say you are. If I know any thing of their disposition, the greatest pleasure they can ever feel, will be to contribute to your comfort and happiness, as long as you and William are spared to them."

“ Ah ! madam, that is just what William keeps telling me ; but still I have my fears.”

“ Nonsense, Jane ! Don't give way to such absurd, not to say unjust, suspicions. Come, put on your Sunday's gown ; you shall go with Jessie and me to Glenlyn. I'll warrant you, a day spent with us, will chase away all such follies from your mind.”

Jane made many excuses ; but at last she consented ; and having given all the necessary directions to the little girl whom William had hired to live with her from the time of poor Annie's death, she accompanied Lady Beaumont and her daughter home ; and in the course of the day, recovered her spirits so far as to appear perfectly cheerful. Jessie saw her home ; and when taking leave for the night, was again pressed to her mother's breast, who, with a flood of tears, exclaimed, “ I will try, dear Jessie, to believe that you will never forsake me ; for I really think, were I to lose you, I should soon sink into the grave. Remember the promise you made our dear Annie, that you would always supply her place to me as long as I live. I am easy

whenever I think of that ; for I know you loved her sincerely, and will never break a promise so solemnly given."

"Never, mother," answered Jessie, looking surprised ; "but even without that promise, how can my mother think so meanly of her own child ? It hurts me greatly, when you speak thus ; as I think I must, however unintentionally, have been guilty of some neglect that I am not aware of."

"Oh ! no, my child, you have always been the best and kindest of girls to me and mine. I never will again pain you as I have done these two last days ; but when the trial comes, you will understand the meaning of my fears."

A whole fortnight passed, from this time, before any thing was heard at Glenlyn, either of William or Allen. At last, the little post-boy returned from Linton with a large packet, addressed to Lady Beaumont. It began thus :

"My dear Mary must have been lost in astonishment, at being so long without hearing from her friends in London. Set your heart at rest, my love. Nothing now awaits you but happiness and joy, so far

beyond what any of us could ever have anticipated, that the relation will appear almost a fiction to you; for even now, when I have convincing proofs before me of its truth, I feel as if I were in a delightful dream, and dread being awakened from it; but to give you a regular account, I must begin from the day I last wrote to you.

“ I had scarcely finished my letter, when I was summoned to attend Colonel Monteith; but as no mention was made of Arthur’s being wanted, I left him at the Inn. On entering the sick room, I found the invalid considerably worse. The surgeon, who was sitting by him, informed me in a whisper, that his patient had but a few hours to live. As I approached the bed, he endeavoured to speak; but a violent spasm prevented him for some minutes. When that was past, he cried, ‘ Beaumont, you promised to pray for me. Why should I be obliged to die now, when I have made all the reparation in my power?’ ‘ Compose your mind, my dear colonel,’ answered I, ‘ and allow me to send for a clergyman, to assist you in praying for yourself. Nei-

ther my prayers nor his can be of any avail, unless you confess your sins to God, and endeavour, through the merits of your Saviour, to make your peace with heaven.'

" 'I won't die, I tell you, Beaumont ; I am not fit either to pray, or to listen to anything a priest can say to me. I have never looked into a Bible, since I was a boy at Monteith House. How, then, can I know any thing about the matter ?'

" Greatly shocked, I tried all in my power to awaken the poor wretched man to a proper sense of his awful situation. He would listen to nothing I could urge ; but continued screaming and declaring that he would not, and could not, die. Alas ! we all saw that the very violence of his conduct, and his inward compunctions, were rapidly accelerating the very event he dreaded. I will not, my love, harass your mind by a longer description of the painful scene. Three hours did he continue struggling and suffering beyond any thing I ever before witnessed ; and God forbid that I should ever again be compelled to be present at so dreadful a termination to a fellow creature's life ! Hatred to his son, seemed

to have taken complete possession of his mind ; and we were forced to oblige Colin to leave the room, as his father's violence was increased by the very sight of the poor young man. About half past two in the morning, the colonel became so weak as to be unable longer to articulate ; and just as the clock struck three, he expired, grasping my hand in agony. For some time before his death, I had knelt at his bed side, praying earnestly for mercy to the dying sufferer. He seemed to give attention to the ejaculations I uttered ; and even at the moment when he drew his last breath, his eyes were eagerly fixed on mine. Oh ! what a lesson is such a death, to all those who not only neglect God themselves, but in the hey-day of health and strength, make religion a laughing stock, and by example, as well as precept, seduce the young and unwary to tread in their steps. Even his only son became to him an object of hatred and dislike, by reflecting back to him, as in a mirror, his own worthless character ; and thereby heightening to his awakened mind, the culpability of his own neglect and cruelty, in having reared a fellow

creature, who was neither fit to live in this world, nor to be removed to a better.

“Colin was informed of his father’s death, as gently as we could. He raised his heavy eyes to Arthur, and said, ‘Oh, Mathieson, that I had listened to your kind and friendly admonitions! then death would not have been arrayed in such terrors, at its near approach. Tell me, oh! tell me, if there is yet time to save me from such an end as has now taken place? The very sound of those screams for mercy and pardon, yet ring in my ears, and seem to say that I too am lost for ever.’

“With earnestness and feeling, Arthur entreated him to make use of the time that was yet his own; assuring him that his Heavenly Father was ever willing to receive, through the merits of his Son, even the guiltiest of sinners. He recommended his sending for a clergyman, to assist him in his devotions, and promised not to leave Richmond till he gave him leave. We waited till the arrival of the clergyman, who appears a truly respectable and pious man; and then having introduced him to this unfortunate youth, we left the house,

and retired to our beds, being extremely exhausted from fatigue, both of body and mind.

“Nearly a week had elapsed, during which, Colin’s illness and state of nervous irritability had chained us constantly to his bed side, for he never enjoyed a moment’s peace, but when holding Arthur by the hand, and listening to his pious and instructive conversation ; while I, fearful, I confess, for the health of my excellent young friend, trembled to leave him, though every day made it more necessary for me to consult with my counsel on the validity of the colonel’s will, and to take active steps for preventing trouble from the husband of his daughter ; Colin having warned me, that unless I was on my guard, this man would be very likely to contest the disposition of his father-in-law’s property.

“One morning, on seeing Colin a little easier, I determined to go to London on this business, Colonel Monteith having been buried two days before. After several hours attention to the affair, it was at length properly arranged, and I began to think of returning to Richmond ; when

having, for the first time, found a spare moment, I sat down to give you an account of all that had passed. Just as I was beginning to write, my servant came up and said, that there were two persons from Scotland below, who would take no denial, but insisted on being admitted to see me. The name of dear Scotland, was enough to gain their pardon for so unseasonable an intrusion; I eagerly enquired who they were?

“ ‘They will not tell their names, sir. They say that their business is urgent, and that they must see you to night. One of them looks like a farmer, but the other is a genteel young man.’

“ ‘Send them up directly,’ answered I, almost alarmed for the news I was going to receive. But guess my astonishment and delight, on beholding the good and worthy William Mathieson enter the room, with a young man, whom I instantly knew to be his son Allen. After the first moments of so happy a re-union were over, I expressed my regret at Arthur’s absence, and explained the reason of it.

“ ‘I am quite as well pleased,’ answered

William, 'that Arthur is not here at present; my business in London is of a nature that requires your private ear in the first place, before either he or Allen can be admitted into my secret; and as it is likewise one that requires instant attention, I wish Allen directly to go to bed. He is overcome with fatigue, and will be much better employed in sleeping that off, than in sitting by himself a couple of hours; for so long, I believe, my business will fully occupy us.'

"I instantly rang, and enquired if my friends could be accommodated in the same lodgings with myself; and was fortunate enough to find that they could. As soon, therefore, as Allen's room was ready, and we had taken some slight refreshment, he left us; and William, drawing his chair close to mine, began in a low voice a relation which soon rendered me as eager to listen, as he was to relate. I shall not attempt to give it in his own words, but shall merely inform you of the great outlines, reserving all other particulars till we meet.

"He tells me that he was born upon the

estate of Monteith; that he was brought up, by his father, as a farmer; and that he looked forward to succeeding to a pretty considerable farm, which his ancestors had held under the Lairds of Monteith for many generations. He was an only son, and as soon as he had attained the age of manhood, his father, (who very naturally wished him to marry and settle near him) in order to induce him to comply with these wishes, built a very pretty cottage at the end of the village of Monteith, adjoining to the farm; and promised him, as a marriage portion, fifty acres of land, with above a hundred more at his death. William, however, was several years before he could fix on a wife; but at last he became acquainted with Jane Morrison, from her living as nursery-maid in the family of Hector Monteith; a mutual attachment took place between them, and as her parents were respectable tenants on Sir Alexander M'Donald's estate, and bore excellent characters, old Mathieson gave his consent to the marriage, which was solemnized when the laird's eldest child was about two years old.

From that time, the young couple resided in their cottage in the village, and all seemed to go on well with them. They were respected by their neighbours, and greatly favoured by Mrs. Monteith, who had been much attached to Jane, when in her family; and continued frequently to call on her, and to send the children to visit her, till the unfortunate period of the rebellion. On this occasion, both William and his father positively refusing to follow the laird, Hector became extremely irritated with them; and, for some months, all intercourse ceased between the families.

“After the battle of Culloden, when Hector was discovered and arrested at the house of your nurse, (who, as you know, was the mother of Jane) William and his wife became exceedingly anxious for the safety of Mr. and Mrs. Monteith and the children; and conceived, that as it was perfectly known throughout the country, that the Mathiesons were the only friends of the reigning monarch, on the whole estate of Monteith, they could assist their distressed laird and his family, with less suspicion than any one else. Resolving, at length,

to make the attempt, William pretended to his father, that he was tired of a farmer's life, and was determined to try what he could do as a carrier between Stirling and Edinburgh. The old man did not like this at all; but he was ill, and not likely to live long; and William, therefore, delayed putting his intentions into execution for a few weeks; at the end of which, his father died, and left him at liberty to follow his own inclinations. He instantly formed his plan, and having prevailed with Jane's father to come and reside on his farm, quitted Monteith, leaving his wife and children behind him till he had brought his schemes to maturity.

“For several weeks he continued to travel regularly between Edinburgh and Stirling, as a carrier, privately endeavouring, by every means he could devise, to gain access to the prisoners in Stirling Castle, as well as to pick up information on all that concerned them. At last, he learned, from undoubted authority, that Hector was to be, in a few days, removed to Carlisle, and that the unfortunate mother and her infants were to be committed to the care of Colonel Monteith, whose character he had

learnt, many years before, from Jane's father, who had known him perfectly, and represented him in his true colours. Greatly alarmed, he resolved to risk every thing to save them; and, through a pretty handsome bribe to the under gaoler, who was a relation of Jane's, he succeeded in gaining access to his master, only two nights before his removal actually took place. In that interview, they agreed on a method of saving the children from the hands of the colonel. The very next morning, before it was light, Monteith, with the assistance of a rope which William had conveyed to him under his clothes, lowered the three poor infants from the prison window, and they were safely received below by the faithful couple; for Jane had joined her husband. Strong gratitude and affection for her kind mistress, had even induced her to quit a father, to whom she was powerfully attached, and whose influence over her mind had, till then, been irresistible.

“ Having thus obtained possession of the children, William conveyed them, as had been directed by their father, to Edinburgh,

to their mother's aunt, Mrs. Rachel Campbell, who placed them under the care of Jane Mathieson, at an obscure house in the Canongate, promising him every assistance in her power for their support. William returning to his business of carrier, was able by that means to obtain occasional information of their unhappy mother ; but he found her so strictly watched, that without endangering the discovery of the children, he never could venture to approach her. She at last died ; and he was no sooner certain of this fact, than he hurried to Carlisle, in hopes of being able to get admission to his master, and to receive from him more exact directions concerning the disposal of the infants. He reached that town, however, only in time to see him brought out on the scaffold. With some difficulty, he succeeded in attracting poor Monteith's notice ; who, with astonishing presence of mind, contrived in an address, (which to all but William had the appearance of being meant for the whole assembly) to give him a solemn charge to educate and bring up the children as his own.

“ The fatal scene was no sooner over, than

William returned to his wife, and informed her of the engagement he had taken upon himself, with regard to the orphans. He gave her a free option, either to leave him altogether, and return to her father, or to take a solemn vow, that she would never (till he gave her leave) utter, even to him, the name of Monteith; and agree to retire with him into some obscure part of the country, where the children might pass for their own.

“Jane, to her honour be it recorded, did not hesitate a moment in her choice between the two alternatives. She instantly took the vow prescribed by her husband; nor during the many long years that have since passed, has she, either in prosperity or in adversity, ever shown the slightest symptom of regret, at having sacrificed so much to secure the welfare of her poor mistress’s orphans.

“Mrs. Campbell died at the end of two years, and left William three hundred pounds, being all that she durst venture to withdraw from her little property, without exciting suspicion in the minds of her heirs. On the event of her death, William thought

a country life was much better suited both to himself and his wife, than the business he had engaged in. He, therefore, set about seeking employment as a labourer, upon some estate in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh; and was fortunate enough to be hired by our friend M'Farlane, who was then in want of a farm-servant at Glenlyn. He removed thither early in the spring, and by his good conduct and abilities, soon recommended himself so much to his employer, as to receive in reward for his industry, one of the new cottages at Carlin's Loup; where he had lived about five years, before we so fortunately discovered the dear children, that memorable evening at Habbie's How.

“His conduct with regard to the different members of his family, is now completely explained; and I think it more clearly shows his strong good sense and rectitude, than any other part of his conduct. It, likewise, clearly explains Arthur's firm refusal to become our foot-boy, at a time when, to those not in the secret, his conduct appeared no less extraordinary, than the sanction his father gave to his refusal.

William tells me, that young as Arthur was, when he quitted his parents in Stirling Castle, he retained the recollection of them so firmly in his mind, that on a conversation which our offer occasioned between them, he found it was in vain to attempt to deceive him. Arthur declared that he knew he was not his son ; but that his parents were gentlefolks, like the laird and his lady. William, upon reflection, deemed it best to own that the boy was right. He, therefore, told him that such was the case ; but that his real father, in committing his three children to the charge of their supposed parent, had exacted a promise, that their origin should be concealed, until the youngest had attained the age of manhood, nor even be revealed but under strong restrictions. This had the best possible effect on the mind of Arthur, who, from that moment, religiously abstained from even mentioning the subject. It, however, gave his mind, undoubtedly, a stimulus to improvement ; and determined him to try all the means that education and study could furnish, to fit himself for the rank to which he was born. How he succeeded

in acquiring not only general knowledge, and the accomplishments of a scholar, but likewise very considerable skill in the French and Italian languages, with a degree of polish and elegance of manners beyond what Scotch lads in any rank of life commonly attain, has always appeared to me to be next to miraculous. William, however, tells me, that Arthur owed to him, there was a secret in his education which he was not at liberty to disclose, but which he hoped to be able to explain at some future time to his satisfaction.

“ Whatever his secret is, Allen (who, I have no doubt, you guess by this time is Monteith’s second son) appears to have shared in its advantages ; at least as far as manner and address go ; for he is certainly as genteel and well bred a young man as I have seen for a long time. William says there was no one circumstance that gave him more pleasure, than your offer to take charge of one of his daughters ; for it was the only thing he could not manage to his own satisfaction, or that of his wife’s, who even fretted more than he did, of the idea of her dear mistress’s daughter, Jessie,

being brought up in a cottage, ignorant of the manners and accomplishments that had been so conspicuous in her mother.

“ On hearing you read Colonel Monteith’s confession, and learning the near prospect of his death, William wisely thought that no time ought to be lost in drawing up a petition to government for the restitution of the children’s rights ; a great many letters and papers, tending to corroborate the facts relative to the means used to seduce both their father and Sir Alexander, had been placed in his hands by Monteith, when he saw him in Stirling Castle, and these papers he has now brought to town with him. I am busily engaged in preparing a representation of the case to government, in which I have been greatly assisted by some documents and papers delivered to me by Allen ; though he refuses to explain how he came by them, till the result of the application is known. I know not what to suspect ; but I believe you must be in that secret, as you have already owned you are with regard to your father’s seal.

“ William and I must remain in London during this business ; but we have dispatched

Allen to the assistance of his brother, who writes, that Colin continues much in the same state as when I left him. Do not, William begs of you, inform Jessie of her real birth at present, as he thinks it better, till he can return home, to conceal it both from her and Jamie, who, no doubt, poor fellow, will be greatly hurt at being in one moment deprived of three relatives to whom he has always been so strongly attached. The restriction, however, does not extend to Jane. She well deserves every comfort and attention in our power to pay her. Arthur and Allen are to know nothing of what has been discovered, till we can join them at Richmond, as it would naturally distract them from the attention and care they ought to pay to their suffering cousin ; and in other respects, could answer no good purpose. You shall hear from me again, as soon as I can give you any good news ; but do not be impatient, for my time is so occupied, that I have not a moment to myself."

"How amazing!" exclaimed Lady Beaumont, laying her letter on the table, "that Jessie, the adopted niece of Beaumont and

myself, should turn out to be the daughter of my own dear Mary Campbell, the companion and playmate of my infant years. Oh ! how richly am I rewarded for having chosen this sweet girl from all other children, and for having bestowed on her the advantages which my own acquirements and information have enabled me to communicate ; advantages that were gained years ago, in the society of her own mother !”

CHAPTER V.

ANOTHER fortnight passed, before Lady Beaumont heard again from her husband ; but the contents of the letter which then arrived, richly repaid her for all the anxiety she had endured.

Sir Charles informed her, that on laying before the KING the memorial which he had drawn up, accompanied with the documents furnished by William and Allen, and the will and confession of Colonel Monteith, HIS MAJESTY was so indignant at the treachery employed against Hector and Sir Alexander, and so much struck with the fidelity and astonishing exertions of William for the preservation of the orphans, that he instantly directed his minister to recommend to Parliament a reversal of the attainder against both the families of Monteith and M'Donald ; and there was no doubt but that, as soon as the forms of business could be

gone through, the rank and fortunes of both would be once more restored to them. Colin had been privately informed of Arthur's relationship, and of the safety of those poor little orphans, whose fate, from the moment he had understood the arts that had been employed to ruin them through the means of his unprincipled father, he had been so anxious to ascertain. William, at his particular desire, had revealed to Arthur and Allen the eventful history of their own birth, and the melancholy events that had led to the destruction of their parents. The astonishment of Allen was beyond description; and for some time he would scarcely believe that the account could be real. But the testimony of his brother, who assured him that he perfectly recollected his own father, and likewise the last injunctions he gave him, to consider William as his parent till he himself could again see him, at last convinced him of the truth.

Colin seemed just to have lived long enough to be assured of his cousins' safety. He gradually sank, from the day that the information of the King's intention in favour of the orphans, reached Richmond; and

two days before Sir Charles wrote, he breathed his last in Arthur's arms, with every appearance of having repented sincerely of his errors. Almost his last words were: "Oh! that I too had been brought up in a cottage, and had received the invaluable instructions of a Christian father, so far superior at this awful hour, to all the fortune and honours on which my misguided parent placed such value! Then I might have met death with composure and resignation. Then I might have been spared the agony of a broken spirit; looking fearfully forward to a world which endeth not, and in which there is no respect of persons."

"Allen has promised me," continued Sir Charles, "a solution of his mystery, when I arrive at Glenlyn. I hope that that will now be soon; and my dear Mary may rest assured, that the moment the business of our orphans is finished, I shall not lose a moment in quitting London, on my way to the home that now appears to me more precious than ever, and from which, I promise you, no motives of ambition shall ever have power to tempt me."

About a month from the receipt of this letter, Sir Charles Beaumont and William drove up to the door of Glenlyn House, where they were met by the whole of their friends, who had been sent for by Lady Beaumont, in the morning, to enjoy the happy meeting.

“My boys!” exclaimed Jane. “Where are they? Have they really refused to gratify me with once more pressing them in my arms, and hearing them call me by the name of mother?”

“Think not so meanly, my dear Jane, of our precious sons. A business of great consequence, they assure me, must prevent them from joining us for a couple of hours; then you will find them all that the fondest and most attached mother can wish. They left us at Edinburgh; but I have no doubt they will join us before the hour of dinner; and till then, we must try to be as happy as we can with the children that are here, and who are as dear to me as even Arthur and Allen, with all their new dignities.”

“Ah! there is the misfortune,” returned Jane, despondingly. “Allen may still love us; for he is so mild and humble, that I

fear little for him; but Arthur, even in infancy, had always such a high and lofty way with him, that I cannot think he ever again will look upon poor Jane Mathieson as a parent."

"Mother! mother!" cried Jessie, "what has come to you? A little while ago, you took it into your head that I should treat you ungratefully, for no reason that I could ever discover. Now you have transferred the foolish notion to poor Arthur, whose whole study, all his life, has been to make you and my father comfortable. Never has a single packet come from India, without his enclosing for you some mark of his dutiful affection, both in words and deeds; and why you should suppose that he has learned to be wicked, and to despise his parents, I cannot possibly conceive. I'll insure both his love and duty to you; and what is more, you will be heartily ashamed of ever having suspected either, before he has been half an hour in the house."

"God grant, my dear Jessie, that you may be a true prophet! but even yet I have my doubts." William smiled. "Well, well, Jane, be as unbelieving as you please.

Time will show you who is right. For my part, though I have as much reason to fear as you have, I am not going to put such fancies into their heads ; and what is more, as long as I am alive, I shall think myself as well entitled to find fault with the laird, if I see him going wrong, as I ever did with the bare-footed boy in the cottage at Carlin's Loup."

"And a reproof of your's, William," said Sir Charles, "will be as well received by the laird, or I am much mistaken, as ever it was by the bare-footed boy. Arthur is not a pin altered in character, since the first moment I saw him on the branch of that fearful tree that hangs over the waterfall. Even then, of his own accord, he gave me promise never to go on that dangerous tree again, the moment he saw me alarmed for his safety. And can you, Jane, suppose that the boy who was so fearful of giving pain to a stranger, would now, as a man, wilfully agonize the bosom of one who has acted as you have done towards him, from infancy?"

Another carriage was, at that moment, heard driving towards the house. "Here

they are!" cried Jessie and Lady Beaumont, both at once. "They must answer for themselves." Both ran towards the house door, where they saw the strangers, supporting between them a reverend old gentleman, who appeared so agitated, as scarcely to be able to ascend the steps with their assistance; and who, our readers will be already prepared to hear, was no other than old ROBERT!

Lady Beaumont, who was a little way behind Jessie, uttered a violent scream, and sprung past her, just in time to receive in her arms, her father, who, in his haste to reach her, would have fallen, had she not caught him. Her voice had been heard by her husband, who hurried forward to see what was the matter. The sight that met his eye, rendered him speechless from surprise. At length, he exclaimed, "Can it be possible, that I see my uncle, SIR ALEXANDER M'DONALD, alive, and in my house?"

"Yes, Charles, you do, indeed, see your uncle, who feels ashamed to come into your presence, after having ever believed that you were capable of being a villain.

To these dear young men, I, in a great measure, owe my preservation through so many years of solitude. They supplied my wants, afforded me employment and amusement in their boyhood, society and conversation as they advanced in years, and at last, they have been, through the blessing of Providence, the instruments of restoring me to my honour and fortune ; as well as to the prospect of ending my days in the bosom of my family."

The history of Arthur's first discovery of Sir Alexander, every thing that followed with regard to his education, and likewise the great improvement that Allen reaped from his subsequent intercourse with his old friend, were all now related. This recital exceedingly increased the high opinion which Sir Charles already entertained of both his young friends ; and, at the same time, greatly astonished William, when he found that they had, for so many years, been able to preserve the secret entrusted to them inviolable.

Jane's fears were hushed to sleep for ever. She found Arthur was, if possible, more affectionate, and studious of fulfilling

her wishes, than even when he was the little bare-legged boy in the cottage at Carlin's Loup. Jessie, dear Jessie, was likewise the same attentive and attached daughter she ever had been ; and she even shed tears, when informed that she had no natural claims upon her as a mother. Sir Charles and Lady Beaumont were now the happiest of human beings. Surrounded by a family, who even by blood, were there nearest connections ; who, through their means, had been enabled to recover their rank and property ; and who, by their benevolence and kindness, had been rendered fit to associate with their equals. " Ah ! how little," exclaimed Sir Charles, as they sat round the table after dinner, " did we imagine, when we first talked of placing William at Lochmore, that we were then enabling him to rear the children of Monteith, and our cousin Mary ; and that by their means, we were raising up the preservers and comforters of our beloved father ! without such comforters, he never could have survived so many years of misery ; and without our having made William comparatively easy in his circumstances,

a thousand chances to one, if even Arthur, with all his industry and perseverance, could have attained the first object of his ambition, a commission in the King's service."

"True," answered Lady Beaumont, "but you must not forget that our interest in William, was excited by the artless and upright conduct of his children, in our interview with them at Habbie's How. The pains and care which he bestowed upon them, even whilst he was reduced to labour in the meanest employment, afford a striking lesson to the peasantry of every country, how much they may have in their power to contribute, both to the happiness and prosperity of their families, by making the scriptures the constant rule of their actions, and bringing up their children in the fear and nurture of the Lord."

Sir Alexander and Sir Charles thought it advisable for Arthur to lose no time in establishing himself at Monteith; and after some little consideration, it was determined that they should set out themselves a few days before any other of the party, in order to have every thing settled before the

young heir was introduced to his dependants. Lady Beaumont greatly objected to her father's attempting to take such a journey; but the old man seemed to have recovered his youth, and declared that he would walk barefoot, rather than not be present when the son of Hector Monteith was reinstated in his birthright.

"But consider your great age, dear sir," still pleaded his daughter. "If the journey should be too much for you, we shall none of us forgive ourselves for having yielded to your wishes."

"Poh! poh! girl," answered he, as he stepped into the carriage, "I am the youngest of you all, at this time, and can feel no fatigue when engaged in such a cause."

Ten days from the time of their departure, Arthur, William, and Jessie, in one carriage, and Lady Beaumont, Jane, and Allen, in another, quitted Glenlyn, on their way to Monteith. Jamie had accompanied Sir Charles and Sir Alexander, as they thought he would be of great service to them, by his activity and skill in settling the necessary business relative to the tenants

on the estate, and in saving them from much fatigue, which otherwise they would have been obliged to undergo.

The day shone bright, and all nature seemed to rejoice in the welcome return of the rightful heir of Monteith, to the mansion of his ancestors. As they passed through Stirling, William carried his young friends to the very spot where he first received them out of the basket, when lowered by the trembling hands of their affectionate father. "From that window, my children, did you descend; a spot which I now shudder to look on, as the slightest turn in struggle on your parts, must have placed you in great jeopardy, and might have occasioned your destruction. On that morning, my dear Arthur, you first displayed the obedience and resolution which have since become so prominent features in your character; for if you had not, from a wish to save your poor mother's tears, obeyed your father's instructions, and resolutely suppressed the screams which the terror of such a descent might naturally have inclined a child of your age to utter, your own ruin, and that of your brother

and sister, must have been the consequence. Let it act, my son, as a lesson to you, if it should ever please God to make you a father, to be careful in rearing your infants, even from the earliest age, in habits of strict obedience to your own commands, and in uniform respect and love to their mother. Few had ever so much reason as you have, to bless God that their parents had followed these rules. I sincerely trust that no child of yours will ever be placed in similar danger; yet rest assured, that in all situations during life, such lessons will be productive, both to the parent and the child, of most essential advantages; and if such a foundation is once laid, easy will be the acquisition of all other good principles and virtues."

Our young friends were much affected at seeing the prison of their parents; and Lady Beaumont, fearful of spreading a gloom over a day dedicated to happiness and rejoicing, eagerly pressed William to quit Stirling, and proceed towards Monteith, which lay about seven miles to the north of that ancient city.

The Mansion House of Monteith was

originally a handsome old fashioned edifice, of considerable size. It was built like many gentlemen's houses in Scotland, in the form of a castle; being surrounded with turrets, and having a sort of embattlement round the roof. The woods which grew thickly on all sides, prevented it from being seen from the road at any great distance; but as our friends drove through the little straggling village which bore the name of the estate, they caught a sight of one single turret, which rose above the rest, and formed a striking feature of the landscape.

“ Ah !” exclaimed Jane, eagerly letting down the glass, “ there is my lady's turret, where you, my dear Allen, were born, and where I have passed so many happy days.”

Allen was prevented from replying by a number of the tenants who approached to meet the carriages, and who, in proof of the delight they felt on seeing the children of their old master returned among them, insisted on being allowed to draw them up to the house of Monteith. Arthur and Allen remonstrated against this as much as they could, but they were obliged to submit, or they would have hurt the feelings of

those who meant to do them honour. William sat back in the carriage, that he might not be recognized ; but Jane leaned eagerly forward to watch the various countenances that surrounded her, in hopes of seeing her father or brother amongst them. At last her brother's face met her eye. Unable to contain herself any longer, she called out, " Jamie Morrison ! Jamie Morrison ! do I live to see you again at Monteith ? "

Her brother, who was one of the most eager in drawing the carriage, at the sound of his own name, looked hastily up, and instantly recognized his sister, to whom he had been particularly attached, and whom he had for many years firmly believed to be dead.

" Jane ! my sister Jane ! " cried he, letting go his hold. " Oh ! it is she who has saved the orphans ! " The poor fellow would have fallen to the ground, if one of his neighbours had not supported him ; and it was with the utmost difficulty that Allen could prevent Jane from getting out of the carriage to his assistance. " Bring him up, my friend, to Monteith House," said Allen.

“There we shall rejoice to see any relation of my dear mother, and my equally dear father.”

“He called me mother, Lady Beaumont,” said Jane, bursting into tears of delight; “did you hear that, even before the whole tenants of Monteith? Ah! I am the proudest and the happiest of women this day.”

“My dearest mother,” said Allen, putting his arms round her, and straining her to his breast, “do you suppose that any of us will ever give you another name, let who will be present? nay, even were the King upon his throne beside us, you and my father must ever hold the place you have so long and so faithfully filled, both in our love and respect.”

It is quite impossible to describe the meeting between Jane and her father. The old man had been singled out by Sir Charles, who had kept him in the house with himself, when the other villagers went out to meet the carriages. On being informed of the part William and Jane had acted, his astonishment was beyond bounds; and whilst he expressed his delight and

happiness, he declared that had he ever suspected what were the motives for their quitting the country, so far from blaming them as he had done, he would have sold every thing he possessed, to have assisted them in rearing the orphans.

Little more remains to be related. Arthur, beloved and respected by every one, fixed his residence at Monteith, where in the course of a few months he married an amiable young woman in the neighbourhood.

Allen, from choice, entered into the church; and very soon afterwards, upon the death of the clergyman of the parish in which the estate of Monteith lay, he was presented to the living by his brother, in whose gift it was. In this situation he became a blessing to his parishioners, and an ornament to the sacred profession to which he belonged.

Jessie continued to reside with Sir Charles and Lady Beaumont at Glenlyn, paying regularly a visit to her brothers every year; generally spending several months with them, and always quitting them with regret. She became, at the age of twenty-four, attached to a nephew of Sir Charles,

and shortly afterwards married him, to the satisfaction of all connected with her; and as he was the presumptive heir to the title and estate of his uncle, it was to Sir Charles and Lady Beaumont, an union above all others desirable.

William and Jane were glad when their son James informed them of his intention of bringing home a wife to Lochmore; for they had long determined to give up that farm to him as soon as they could see him comfortably settled in marriage. His choice fell upon Mrs. Brown's daughter; and in little more than a year after that marriage, Allen was united to her sister, so that he and James became in reality what they had long been in affection—brothers.

William on giving up his farm, returned with his wife to their much loved cottage at Monteith; all Arthur's entreaties not being able to prevail on them, either to reside with him, or to allow him to build a better house on his own little farm.

“No, my son,” answered William, “I never will consent to be any thing beyond a respectable farmer. In that rank I was born; and in that rank, if it please God,

I will die. I am willing to continue to be considered by you as your father, so far as confidence and affection go ; for I think I deserve to be so treated and respected by you ; but I will never allow either your kindness or my own vanity, to make me forget what I owe to my own character. It was a rule taught me by my good and worthy father, never to aspire to a situation, which neither my birth, habits, nor education, rendered me fit to occupy. I have followed the same rule with regard to my son James ; though by the pains you bestowed on him in his youth, he is more polished than his father ever was. He has contrived, indeed, to marry above the rank to which his birth entitled him ; yet as his wife has been brought up with economy, and is a sensible girl, the daughter of an honest man, who loved him like a son, I did not oppose his choice."

Jane was one of the happiest of human beings. She was tenderly beloved by her husband ; and all her children paid her the most unremitting attention, never suffering her to grow weary of separation from them, always contriving, that during the hours

of William's absence, some one of them should visit her. Her daughters-in-law, as she called them, both entered with the liveliest interest into the feelings and wishes of their husbands, respecting and treating her exactly as if she had been their own mother.

Thus have I brought to a conclusion the history of ARTHUR MONTEITH. If I have related it properly, it must have carried its own moral along with it; but my young readers will, perhaps, expect that I should direct their attention to the principal lessons that I wished to inculcate, not only in this volume, but in the book of which it is a continuation. Well, then, we will begin with the first foundation of all those good and honourable feelings, which distinguished our hero throughout the course of his life. "*Honour thy father and thy mother,*" was the law early and deeply imprinted on his young heart. *Respect* for his parents, and consequent *obedience* to their commands, enabled him, though little more than an infant, to suppress his cries, when placed in a situation where, without such habits, he would naturally have given

way to the force of terror, the consequence of which must have been the ruin of himself, as well as of his brother and sister. The same habits led him to submit to the directions of WILLIAM MATHIESON, even when too young to judge of the motives which influenced the latter to exact silence on a subject so highly interesting to him as his birth. Again, subsequently, when from his age and acquirements he might naturally have hoped to be trusted with the secret, we have seen him evince the same respect and obedience to his kind protector, without allowing himself to doubt the propriety of William's decision. Another result of his early submission to the authority of his parents, was that *strength of mind*, which is acquired by imposing a restraint on the will. This it was which enabled him to preserve for such a length of time, the secret of SIR ALEXANDER M'DONALD; and by so doing, to secure the life and safety of his father's friend, and his benefactor's uncle. The religious and moral lessons which were first impressed on his mind, under the parental roof, and afterwards nurtured and brought to maturity by the

care of William, enabled the virtuous youth to withstand the temptations, and overcome the trials, which he met with in the world ; to become a blessing to his friends, and a comfort even to the dying sinner. They gave him strength to persevere in those honourable exertions which raised him to an elevated rank in society ; and they taught him to look forward with humble confidence in the merits of his Redeemer, to still brighter rewards in a less perishable and more glorious state of existence.

In comparing ANNIE's death with that of COLONEL MONTEITH, my young friends will learn the inestimable value of a well-spent life. It is this that smooths the pillow of the dying Christian ; and though it cannot remove all the bitterness of that awful hour, yet it sustains the fainting soul with a lively hope of inheriting the mansions above.

Nor is the resignation of WILLIAM, when bereft of his dear and amiable daughter, a circumstance from which less instruction is to be drawn ; for it proves that the same faith which is the Christian's support on the brink of the grave, is like-

wise his shield and refuge, amid all the losses and afflictions of life.

If by the perusal of these pages, consolation be afforded to any reader whom death has deprived of a friend ; if any child be taught to imitate the active virtues of ARTHUR, and so to live, as at last to die like ANNIE ; if any parent be induced to imprint more deeply on the minds of his offspring the precepts of religion and virtue, the author will not have laboured in vain, nor will she have cause to regret the time which has been occupied in penning this simple story.



